

Consequences Of Grief

by animexchick

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Summary: A grieving and heartbroken Aramis acts rashly when news reaches him of a friend in trouble and his actions places his brothers in a dangerous situation and starts a race against time to protect those involved, both knowingly and unknowingly, from further harm. Expect lots of whumpage and brotherly moments - It'll be better than the summary I promise :)

1. Grieving

****Evening My Lovelies****

****I'M BAAAACCCCKKKK! Did you all miss me? I missed you all :D

****So, brand new story for you all to read, I'm anticipating it to be around 30-40 chapters but don't hold me to that. I'll be updating daily, or every other day if something stops me from updating when I originally plan to. Any questions, comments, suggestions etc are all very much welcomed. I'm hoping none of my boys go out of character but if they begin to go that way let me know and I'll endeavor to fix it.****

****There's a bit of pressure on me here after my last story went down ridiculously well review and view wise so I'm hoping this story lives up to the standard all you returning readers are used to. ****

****For new readers, Hi :) welcome to my story, if you like musketeer stories with lots of whumpage and cute brotherly moments please check out my other works. ****

****Right enough rambling from me!****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

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><p>Chapter One: Grieving
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"D'Artagnan?" called a distinctly feminine voice that instantly brought the young Gascon from his daydream, though it was only when he saw who was accompanying the woman that he scrambled to his feet.

"Captain!" he exclaimed as he fought his desire to stare at the beautiful redhead that was Constance that accompanied him. If he were able to, he would give anything to spend the rest of his days ensuring that she knew just how beautiful she was. Unfortunately she was already taken so he was trying to distance himself from the temptation that was her presence.

"Why aren't you at the palace with Athos and Porthos?" Treville asked, surprised that the young man, who had made his intentions to be a musketeer perfectly clear, would miss out on any chance to prove himself to the one man who could grant him his dream and provide him with a commission.

"Iâ€|" hesitated the boy as he shuffled awkwardly, "I'm not technically a musketeer so I don't have to be there and Iâ€| I didn'tâ€|"

Treville felt his features soften as he listened to the young man's explanation and took in the helpless expression on the Gascon's face. "Didn't want him to be alone?" he offered, smiling softly at the young man when he nodded in confirmation.

"You're a good man D'Artagnan," smiled Treville, "though I'm guessing our resident Spaniard didn't approve of your action given the fact you were sitting on the ground outside his door and are sporting the beginnings of quite an impressive shiner," remarked the Captain with a knowing look as D'Artagnan quickly turned his face to try to hide the steadily darkening bruise.

"He hit you!" exclaimed Constance, her voice full of worry as she looked at her lodger, wanting nothing more than to reach out and touch him but knowing it would be inappropriate on more than one level for a married woman such as herself to do so.

"I pushed," defended D'Artagnan, not wanting to see his dear friend punished further for something he held no anger over, "The othersâ€| they warned me not to but Iâ€| It's my own fault."

"At ease D'Artagnan," sighed Treville as he raised a hand to stop the boy's worried rambling, "I think, given the circumstances, I can forget about it if that's what you want."

D'Artagnan visibly sagged in relief, "Thank you sir."

"Don't give up on him D'Artagnan," Treville said softly, placing a hand firmly on the Gascon's shoulder, "He'll soon realize he needs help and he'll need you to be there when he does."

"Aint going anywhere sir," grinned the Gascon as he nodded over his shoulder to the water skin and book that were on the ground near

where the boy had been sitting. "'Thos and Porthos can't be here all the time but I can. I'm not leaving."

Captain Treville smiled softly at the newest edition to his garrison. "I will leave him in your capable hands then. I had come up to check on him but I fear my presence might do more harm than good."

"I should get back as well," stated Constance, feeling like she was interrupting a moment for the two musketeers. Gently she placed the basket she was carrying on the ground near Aramis's door, sending a soft smile to the now ever so slightly blushing Gascon she nodded her goodbyes and moved passed the Captain who had spent the entire of their exchange staring at the door of Aramis's room with a guilty expression.

"Heâ€| He doesn't hate you sir," D'Artagnan said suddenly, startling the elder man out of his trance. Seemingly realizing what he had just said D'Artagnan shuffled nervously, "At least I don't think he does. He's hurt and grieving butâ€| but he understands and just needs time."

Saying nothing Treville merely nodded gratefully at the young Gascon before turning on his heels and heading to his office.

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><p>When he was sure both Constance and the Captain were long gone D'Artagnan allowed his true worry show as he slid down the side of the wall until he was back sitting on the ground by Aramis's room like he had been before they had arrived.<p>

Part of him felt like he had no right to be here, offering the man silent support. They had only known each other for a few months after all, but seeing the typically vibrant man break down in grief, as his oldest friend's body grew colder in his arms had ignited a protectiveness within him that he didn't know was even there before. Sure it had come out with the whole incident the previous month when their group was forced to deal with Bonaire and Athos had to handle returning to his childhood home, but this time it was at all new heights and he wasn't sure what to do to help his friend.

That morning was the first morning since it all happened that the 'inseparables' were being called back to duty and without being asked D'Artagnan informed his friends that he would be remaining behind.

He had seen the worry and guilt on their faces at the mere thought of leaving Aramis to deal with his grief over Marsac's death alone and wanted nothing more than to do something to help. The blatant relief and gratitude that lit up their faces was enough to tell the Gascon he had not overstepped his bounds, as he first feared.

They had warned him what Aramis could get like when dealing with overwhelming negative emotions and they had expressly told him not to push things with the grieving marksman and only it was only when he practically pushed them out of the garrison did they leave him to it.

Absently reaching up to graze his fingers over the deepening bruise on his eye, wincing slightly as he did so, D'Artagnan couldn't help

but feel like a failure as he knew seeing it would only worsen the medic's mood when he was out of his grief enough to realize what he had done.

As he said to the Captain, D'Artagnan held no malice towards his friend for his action and actually felt like he had probably deserved it. He had seen how aggravated he was getting with his presence yet the Gascon continued to refuse to leave and trying to get the medic to talk to him. He could only hope that the bruise didn't look as painful as the punch had felt. Aramis had used a lot of strength to punch him, so much so that it sent the Gascon careering to the ground. The last thing he wanted was to add more to the guilt and grief his friend was suffering.

D'Artagnan was pulled from his musings by a raindrop landing right in his eye. Silently cursing the universe for bringing rain now he tightened his jacket around him and brought his knees to his chest in an attempt to protect himself from the rain as much as possible. He had no intention of leaving Aramis to be alone with his grief even in this downpour.

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><p>In the darkness of his room Aramis opened his red-rimmed eyes at the sound of rain hitting the glass of his windows and he had never been more thankful for rain then at that moment as it would provide a reason for D'Artagnan to leave him alone. He vaguely remembered hearing snippets of the boy's conversation with the Captain a little while earlier but drink and grief made his memory sketchy. He had been surprised that the boy had stayed after he had all but thrown him out of his room and now thanks to the rain he could finally be left alone to drink away his grief or at least until he passed out, whichever happened first.<p>

Marsac the voice in his head whispered and the sharpshooter couldn't contain the pained whimper, or the tears that escaped at the reminder of his deceased friend dead by his own hand.

That thought had Aramis retching into the bucket one of his friends had left near his bed before rushing to the small bowl of water on his table, where he furiously scrubbed his hands, tears blurring his vision as he desperately tried to clean his hands.

"ARAMIS!" cried a voice, though it sounded distant and muffled to the medic's ears.

"**ARARMIS!**" cried the voice again, only this time hands also grasped his own and forced them out of the water. Shaking the tears from his vision Aramis felt his eyes widen as he took in the drenched and shaking form of D'Artagnan as he stood before him, the sharpshooter's hands still tightly in his grasp.

"D-D'Artagnan" stuttered the medic as he felt his knees give out and it was only thanks to the Gascon's quick reflexes that stopped him from crashing straight to the ground.

"I've got you," whispered the Gascon soothingly as he slowly lowered both himself and the medic to the ground before pulling the crying man tight to his chest.

"W-Why are y-you wet?" Aramis asked in between his sobs, needing something, anything to distract him from his hands again.

D'Artagnan cocked his head to one side and sent Aramis a look that told him it should have been obvious. "It's raining," he stated, his words backed up by a rumble of thunder in the distance.

Aramis's shaking stopped abruptly as he realized what that meant, "W-Why?"

D'Artagnan sent his crying friend a soft, sad smile as his hand came to run his fingers gently through the medic's hair in a motion that always comforted him as a child. "Didn't want you to feel alone."

Aramis said nothing in response for several moments, choosing instead to tighten his grip on the young man.

"Aramis you're bleeding!" D'Artagnan exclaimed a few minutes later once the medic had calmed down enough to loosen his grip on the Gascon. Ignoring the older musketeer's protests D'Artagnan grabbed his wrists, bringing his hands up to his face so he could see the damage done to them by the medic's excessive scrubbing. The skin on his hands was red raw and the marksman had scrubbed so hard with the brush at certain points that he had actually managed to draw blood.

"I-It's fine," shrugged Aramis weakly as he pulled his hands out of D'Artagnan's grasp, part of him hating missing the warmth against his skin as he did so.

"It's not. Where do you keep bandages?" snapped the Gascon as he moved to stand. The tone D'Artagnan used was one Aramis was not accustomed to hearing during their brief friendship and so he was too stunned to really take in what was being asked of him as he weakly nodded to the bedside table.

"What were you thinking?" muttered D'Artagnan under his breath as he wrapped both of Aramis's hands in bandages, hoping it would dissuade his friend from hurting himself further.

"N-Needed to get rid of it," mumbled the Spaniard, his words slightly slurred as drink and exhaustion caught up with him making him sway occasionally.

"Rid of what?" probed D'Artagnan gently as he helped his friend move to the bed, hoping that the exhaustion and the conversation would keep him from realizing that he was doing so.

"B-Blood," whimpered Aramis as his eyes closed, a few tears escaping through his lashes, "Marsac's blood"

D'Artagnan felt his own eyes prickle with tears at the sight of his brother's pain but pushed them aside to focus on the man before him. Thankfully the Spaniard was apparently tired enough to fall straight to sleep, though the expression on his face told the Gascon it was anything but peaceful.

Carefully D'Artagnan shifted his grip on his friend so he could better position himself by the medic's bedside. Once he was settled

D'Artagnan allowed his hand to return to his friend's hair, smiling sadly as he watched Aramis lean into his touch.

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<p>ELSEWHERE

"P-Please," sobbed a voice tinged with equal parts fear and pain.
"I-I don't knowâ€¦ I hadn't spoken to him in years!"

The voice's begging was interrupted by the harsh crack of a whip, followed immediately by a pained scream.

"A-ARAMIS!" cried the voice, wanting to do anything to make the pain stop, "K-King's musketeersâ€¦ They're f-friendsâ€¦"

2. From Grief To Anger

**Evening My Lovelies :) **

Wow! Loving the response to the first chapter. 19 followers & 13 reviews! You guys are awesome :D

**2 chapters in and I keep wanting to refer to D'Artagnan as a musketeer and then have to remind myself that he's not actually a musketeer yet... if at any point I do refer to him as such please just ignore it. I'm pretty sure I've managed to catch myself before I've actually written it but just in case. **

Notes On Reviews:

lluviayui: Thanks for the review - Glad you liked it. Enjoy the new chapter! x

UKGuest (Guest): Thanks for the review - Glad you liked it and that it's managed to get you intrigued already :) Whumpage wise I'm going to try to spread it between all the boy, though I do have some rather evil plans for a couple of them :D Aramis will be going through a bit of an emotional rollercoaster and he has quite a key part to play. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jasperslittlesister: Thanks for the review - I just couldnt stay away :) Hopefully you'll enjoy the adventure/trouble I have planned for our boys. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Purplelizzziel: Thanks for the review - Glad to be back :) Thankyou I'm glad you think so, I really enjoy writing all the whumpage scenes. Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - D'Art gets to play mother hen again today (I'm quite liking that side of him) We have a few more chapters until we find out what the torturer is after. It'll be a little odd not seeing your old screen-name but I realised who you were as soon as you mentioned our meters :D We will be needing a hate-o-meter so might want to get the order in now :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Always ecstatic to get a new fan so thank you :D I'm going to try to not focus so much on

D'Art this time (though he is sooooo whumpable)... He'll still be getting some but I have a few other rather evil plans for some of our other boys so it wont be (hopefully) as painful for our poor Gascon as my last story was... Though saying that and knowing me he's still probably going to get fairly hurt... I'm evil like that lol :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - I'm glad you thought so :) I just wanted to hug Aramis as I wrote him so sad :(The elsewhere part seems to have everyone intrigued *evil laughs* :D We'll be getting a little more of that today though we wont find out what it's really all about for a few more chapters yet. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Deana: Thanks for the review - Ask and ye shall receive my friend :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Ruth (Guest): Thanks for the review - I just can't stay away for long lol :) I'm glad you're liking the relationship, it's a little trickier for me to write as I have to keep reminding myself that at this point they've only known each other for a little while so their still going to be slightly unsure around each other and D'Artagnan especially would probably be a bit more reserved. Aramis breaking down was so sad to write, I kept just wanting to hug him as I was typing lol Glad you liked the hands bit, it was one of my favourite bits of the chapter (that and what it led to... yay brotherly moments!) You know me too well lol :) I'm enjoying having D'Art all mother-henny and supportive but you're right... it's not going to last long. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Ohh it's good to be back :) With regards to Aramis hitting D'Art I kinda see it like the boy wasnt really sure how to handle him so kept asking questions and trying to get him to talk to him and that coupled with the drink led Aramis to lash out. Our Spaniard isnt really thinking clearly at the moment so the fact that D'Art agreed to help and hide Marsac isnt really registering. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jmp (Guest): Thanks for the review - It broke my heart to write as well :(Unfortunately things arent going to be getting better for our Spaniard any time soon. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - I definitely hope you enjoy this one as much as my others. With regards to Athos whump, dont worry there will be some coming for our man. I have a couple of evil ideas in the works already, one of which is quite serious :D It may take a little while to get there but worry not it will happen. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - Oooh it's good to be back :D I really enjoyed writing emotional Aramis in the last story hence focusing on just after Marsac's death here. It makes it a little annoying for me as I have to remember our boy's havent been the foursome we know and love for very long so I can't have them acting as relaxed and comfortable with each other as they have in my other stories (that and I keep referring to D'Art as a musketeer and having to go back and change it lol) D'Art gets to be a bit of a mother hen in the beginning of this story but that wont last once all the whumpage starts :D Can't resist a bit of guilty musketeers :) Means i can get to cutey musketeer moments afterwards lol and Aramis will be

having LOTS of guilty moments. I hadn't really thought about him getting a cold, though considering what I have already written for our boys (i have several chapters already written) that would be getting off lightly :D Though i do have a bit of all three of them telling him off in a later chapter :D The elsewhere bit does indeed refer to our 'friend in trouble' from my rather crappy summary though that's all I'm saying on the matter :) Enjoy the new chapter!

x

****Cookies & Cakes to you lovely people who follow/favourite/review/read this. You guys are awesome!

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

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><p>Chapter Two: From Grief To Anger

"You're back early," remarked Treville as he noticed the return of two of his men.

"King didn't want us drippin' on 'is floor so sent us back to change," shrugged Porthos, shaking himself to dislodge some of the water that had since soaked into his clothes. Thankfully the storm, despite being sudden, had ended fairly quickly and as such they would be able to return to the palace in dry clothes.

Treville sighed; imagining the reaction the King would have had to the men's current state of attire.

"How is he?" Athos asked hesitantly, pulling the Captain from his musing.

The frown that appeared on Treville's face had both musketeers' worried, though they refused to act upon their concerns until the Captain had explained.

"Still won't leave his room." Sighed Treville turning his head to look over his shoulder towards the medic's room before an idea hit him. "I think D'Artagnan might appreciate it if one of you could lend him something dry to wear, he was out in the storm for most of it."

"What!?" exclaimed the two musketeers, alarm and worry filling their eyes.

"Aramis kicked him out of the room but the young man refused to leave him alone and has spent the better part of the day sitting outside Aramis's door," Treville explained.

"Meet back here in five," stated Athos as he and Porthos shared a look, "I probably have something that might fit the boy."

With no more words said between them the two men split to head to their own rooms to change before checking on their friend.

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><p>From the description Treville had given them earlier, neither men was surprised to find a rather damp looking D'Artagnan in Aramis's room, curled up tight by the musketeer's bed, one hand gripping the medic's own whilst the other unconsciously stroked the man's hair slowly as both men slept.<p>

"Well would ya look at that," grinned Porthos, feeling lighter then he had since the whole Marsac incident at the sight of Aramis sleeping peacefully for the first time in what felt like an age.

Frowning at the deepening bruise he spotted on the young man's face Athos moved to wake their new friend up, doing so carefully so as to not disturb Aramis's rest.

"Aâ€|Athos?" croaked D'Artagnan as his eyes fluttered open, his voice was thick with sleep and as such it took his mind several moments to catch up. When it did the boy shot up and started apologizing profusely for falling asleep when he had promised to keep watch.

"Relax D'Artagnan," Athos soothed, a half smile gracing his face at the younger man's antics. "This is the most peaceful his sleep has been for quite some time now," he explained nodding to the Spaniard, who apart from letting out a small whine at the disappearance of warmth, remained peacefully asleep.

D'Artagnan seemed to visibly relax at the realization that his new friends weren't angry with him, an action that had Porthos chuckling quietly as he ruffled the young man's hair.

"Here," Athos said, passing the boy some dry clothes, "Stay any longer in those wet clothes and you'll get sick."

D'Artagnan opened his mouth to protest but one raised eyebrow stare from Athos had him obeying the request and changing into the slightly too big clothing.

After he was dressed, and Porthos had laughed at how the clothes hung off him, both musketeers were forced to return back to the palace, leaving D'Artagnan alone with the sleeping Spaniard.

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><p>Thankfully for the young Gascon, Aramis was in a much better mood the following day thanks to the long, nightmare free, sleep he had managed the night before and as such protested little to the boy's refusal to leave him alone with his grief.<p>

If he was being honest with himself Aramis was immensely grateful for the young man's presence. While Athos and Porthos knew when to push and when to leave him alone the Gascon did not and there was something about the boy's enthusiasm to help that reminded him of the puppy his family had kept during his childhood that would stumble over its own feet in its effort to follow him and because of that the grieving medic didn't have the heart to berate or snap at the boy.

"So what do you think?" D'Artagnan asked, his voice a mix of

eagerness and trepidation.

"What?" croaked Aramis, his voice hoarse and cringe worthy to his own ears, though he did crack a faint ghost of a smile when D'Artagnan huffed and planted his hands on his hips when he realized Aramis hadn't been paying attention.

"I asked," D'Artagnan said, watching his friend carefully for his reaction to what he was about to ask. "If you felt up to going outside?" At Aramis's slightly panicked expression D'Artagnan was quick to add, "Most of the regiment are out on missions or with Treville at the palace so it's nearly empty out there and I think getting some sun and some of Serge's food in you will helpâ€¦ So, what do you think?"

Aramis was silent for several minutes as he pondered the request. On the one hand he desired nothing more than to wallow in the safety of his room where he could drink himself senseless and to the point where Marsac would hopefully not haunt his dreams. On the other however, he had berated Athos enough times when he did the same thing and the thought of sunlight and the hearty food Serge would no doubt force upon him was equally tempting, as was the desire to repay his young companion for his steadfast loyalty over the last few days, despite the Spaniard's horrid treatment of him.

"We could take it slow," suggest D'Artagnan a slight hopeful tone to his voice. "If at any point you don't want to stay any more we can come back here, no questions asked."

Aramis eyed his young friend for a moment before shakily nodding his agreement to the plan, the urge to smile filling him at the blinding grin D'Artagnan gave in response.

Thirty minutes later the pair found themselves at the inseparables usual table in the garrison courtyard. True to their expectations Serge had placed a large bowl of stew in front of the medic within moments of them sitting down and Aramis had a feeling D'Artagnan had warned the man of his plans before voicing the idea of leaving his room to Aramis.

The medic himself was still very tense and had practically curled himself round the bowl of food, not wishing any other of their brothers to see him in such a state, despite knowing none would judge him for his grief.

D'Artagnan pretended not to notice his friend's state; merely glad that he had succeeded in getting the man out of the dark room he had been cooped up in for a week now and as such was content to carry the majority of their conversation while his friend slowly ate his food.

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><p>"Is there a musketeer named Aramis here?" enquired a voice, startling the pair from their conversation on the advantages of different firearms. D'Artagnan had been hesitant to start this particular line of enquiry at first, given how it had been Aramis's own gun that ended Marsac's life, but he also knew that if there was one thing his friend was passionate about apart from women, which was a subject the Gascon was not going to get into with him, it was

firearms and so he had started the conversation about them in hopes of drawing his friend out of his shell a bit.<p>

At the messengers call Aramis turned, eyes full of curiosity as he beckoned the man over.

"Was asked to get this to musketeer Aramis with the utmost speed, are you him?" asked the messenger as he eyed the haggard looking musketeer in front of him.

Not feeling up to talking Aramis merely nodded and held his hand out for the letter, waiting until the messenger had departed before turning back to the table, ignoring D'Artagnan's poorly concealed curiosity as he opened the letter.

D'Artagnan knew something was up as soon as Aramis began reading, the medic's entire frame tensed up and a flash of anger entered his eyes, though it wasn't until the Spaniard slammed the letter down on the table and unleashed a slew of Spanish curses that he felt it right to enquire.

"Aramis?"

"Cuando encuentro el que se encarga de esto, van a desearÃ-an no haber nacido!" (_When I find whoever is responsible for this, they'll wish they had never been born!)_

"ARAMIS!" exclaimed D'Artagnan as he leapt to his feet to follow the musketeer who was in the process of storming back to his room.

"What's going on?" when Aramis refused to answer and simply focused on packing his bag D'Artagnan was forced to stand in front of his friend, grabbing his wrists to stop him from moving. "Aramis! What's going on?"

Without saying a word Aramis thrust the letter to D'Artagnan's hands before returning to his packing. Eyeing the medic warily D'Artagnan straightened out the letter and began to read, his own anger growing at the obvious threat lying within.

"What's the plan?" D'Artagnan asked, his words startling the medic from his packing. At Aramis's surprised look he elaborated, "There's no way I'm letting you go alone and I can't see you waiting for the others so what's the plan?"

Aramis released a breath he hadn't even realized he had been holding before smiling gratefully at his young friend, the smile contrasting greatly with the grief and worry burning in his eyes. "I can't riskâ€| If this is genuine thenâ€|"

"You plan on attending the meeting," D'Artagnan stated knowingly when Aramis seemed unable to finish his thoughts. Once Aramis nodded he added, "Then if we leave now hopefully we can scout somewhere for me to hide so you'll have back up without them realizing."

_Looks like the time with Athos is beginning to pay off, he's developing a mind for strategy _mused the medic with no small sense of pride as he nodded in agreement and the pair set to work preparing to leave, both ignoring the sickening feeling growing in their guts

that something was about to go horribly wrong.

3. Meeting

****Evening My Lovelies :)****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - Glad you're enjoying the story so far, we're getting a hint of drama today so hopefully you'll like that too :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - D'Art as a mother-hen is quite fun to write... I think it's because he's the youngest. There's going to be quite a bit of Aramis/D'Art moments in this story, or at least in the first part. You'll be getting a glimpse into the letter today so hopefully it'll answer some questions. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Haha that's very true but if he was smart and did that we'd have no story so we'll let him off for now :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Oh trust me I wont :D I just figure the others have been getting off fairly light in comparison... Though knowing me and how much I LOVE to whump D'Art... he'll probably end up quite hurt as well. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - Just can't resist a bit of puppy D'Art :D You're very right to be worried with regards to the letter. We'll be seeing a bit more regarding that today so hopefully it'll clear up a few questions. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the reviews - Didnt have the heart to leave poor Aramis all on his lonesome. I was tempted to have Porthos there instead but figured Treville could probably only keep them off duty for a certain amount of time so D'Art it was :) As for if they informed anyone you'll find out tomorrow. I hadnt even thought about using Kara so no it's not her (though that would have been a good idea) Let's face it when does anything go right for the boys when I'm involved :D *laughs evilly* Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Jasperslittlesister: Thanks for the review - Ooooh great mental image there lol :D I was SOOO very tempted to have it be Porthos who goes all mother-henny on our medic but I figured Treville wouldnt be able to keep them off of duty for too long... that and I quite like the idea of a fretting mother-hen style D'Art lol :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - Yep, pretty much lol :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jmp (Guest): Thanks for the review - Yay I'm glad you think so, we're in for a little bit of drama today, should keep you all entertained :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - Oh they definitely should have

waited for Athos and Porthos, but if they did that we'd have no story so oh well :D I have a feeling D'Art may have used puppy-dog eyes on our Spaniard, no musketeer can say no to them lol. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - Things will start going wrong for our boys today so expect a bit of drama :) the real whumpage wont start for a few more chapters but I'll promise it'll be evil and totally worth it :D... Oh the things I have planned :D Them not knowing each other for very long is quite interesting to write. I've written one comfortyish moment in a later chapter as well as some whumpage and keep having to think how they would react given they're not as close as they are in my other stories... Though saying that they do get quite close quite quickly in the show so that'll help. D'Art's going to be quite unsure where he stands with regards to comfort moments and so is going to be thoroughly embarrassed when they happen to him (though he's very happy on the inside). I agree with your assessment with Athos being a bit more reserved. He's probably more likely to stand guard whilst the others do a puppy pile (I'm not losing my cute puppy pile even if it doesnt completely fit! It's too cute lol) I think with Aramis being quite tactile and Porthos seems fairly easy going and protective they'd both be happy to snuggle up to the boy and include him in their snuggles if they thought it would help. I'm thinking though that by the end of this story Athos will be relaxed enough around D'Art to join in the snuggles. After all I can't end without at least one complete puppy pile (though we've got a while till we get there) Right enough of my rambling about puppy piles lol Enjoy the new chapter! x

**As always many thanks and much love to everyone who follows/favourites/reviews/reads. **

Enjoy!

xxx

* * *

><p>Chapter Three: Meeting
**

"So" D'Artagnan said hesitantly as he watched his friend from the corner of his eyes. The grief that had haunted him for the last week had been replaced by a burning anger and a worry that had D'Artagnan worried. The Gascon was not happy they had left without even informing Treville but Aramis had been insistent and he knew that had he not followed then the medic would have gone without him and that was something he could not allow.

"A friend," Aramis answered quietly knowing what his young friend had been trying to ask. In all honesty the sharpshooter was surprised the boy had held in his curiosity for as long as he had. They had left Paris behind hours ago and he had expected to be hounded with questions as soon as they were away from the garrison, though he was grateful the Gascon had allowed him the time to process the information now swimming in his mind. "She's very dear to me," admitted the medic, closing his eyes and sending up a prayer that his friend wasn't suffering.

D'Artagnan nodded, already able to tell, just from the pain in his eyes and the way he spoke, that the woman mentioned in the letter was

important to the man beside him and for that alone D'Artagnan vowed to do whatever he could to help rescue her.

"Athos isn't going to be happy with us, you know that right?" asked Aramis, knowing just how much D'Artagnan wanted the senior swordsman's approval and praise. The last thing the medic wanted was to cause tension between the two and their developing mentor " student relationship, since D'Artagnan had joined their little group both himself and Porthos had noticed a change in their typically morose friend and Aramis would hate himself if this mission did anything to upset that change.

To the medic's surprise D'Artagnan snorted, "He'll get over it," he shrugged, understanding that Aramis was giving him one last out before they reached the rendezvous point. "He didn't like the whole Vadim thing but he got over that" " might try and kill me with training but he'll understand."

D'Artagnan's words brought a small smile to Aramis's face and the medic couldn't resist the urge to lean over and ruffle the boy's hair. "In all fairness **none **of us liked or agreed with the Vadim situation."

D'Artagnan shrugged in response and bit back the urge to stick his tongue out at his friend.

The pair continued in silence for a short while until they hit a crossroads, at which Aramis pulled his horse to a stop, a small uneasy frown marring his face.

"Aramis?"

"Her home is that way," stated the medic, gesturing to the opposite path that they needed to take to reach the rendezvous point.

"Do we have time?" D'Artagnan asked, knowing that it would help the musketeer to see proof of the woman's capture before the meeting. "It might help us figure out who took her," he added when he saw the uncertainty lining Aramis's face.

"It's not far."

D'Artagnan nodded and turned his horse back so they were set to follow the other path, "Lead the way."

* * *

><p>It was another hour or so until Aramis pulled his horse to a stop in front of a small house on the edge of what appeared to be a tiny farming hamlet. The medic was about to open the door when a voice caught his attention.<p>

"Aramis? Is that you?"

Aramis spun on his heels at the soft voice of the old man approaching him.

"Monsieur Albert" nodded Aramis, a small half smile coming to his face, "It has been a long time."

"Aye," nodded the old man sadly as he took in the grief stricken man before him. "With good reason though," he added, letting the Spaniard know he held no animosity at his long absence.

"I take it she's the cause of your return?" Albert asked, his voice betraying his worry for the woman.

Aramis nodded grimly, "Iâ€| received word she was in trouble," gesturing to D'Artagnan he added, "We came to confirm the truth in that before setting out to help her."

D'Artagnan watched with growing sadness as the old man before them practically sagged under the weight of his worry over the woman and the relief at seeing Aramis again.

"No one's seen her in days," Albert informed them, "A messenger arrived just over a week ago and the next thing we know she's preparing to leave for Paris."

Neither Albert nor D'Artagnan missed Aramis's flinch at the mention of the messenger and the Gascon realized that maybe this mystery woman had some history with Marsacâ€| It was not an absurd a thought he realized, if Marsac's and Aramis's friendship was anything like the one he had with Porthos and Aramis then the now deceased musketeer would most likely have visited this place with him and so would also know the missing woman.

The pair then spent the next several minutes questioning the old man before realizing they needed to leave if they were to make it to the rendezvous point with enough time to scout a position for D'Artagnan before the meeting was to take place.

"J-Just bring her back Aramis," pleaded Albert as he took the musketeer's hands in his own and Aramis couldn't help but nod, he knew the old man and his wife looked out for the woman, treated her like their own and knowing she was in trouble wasn't doing them any good.

"Let's go," Aramis declared with more strength then he felt. The sickening feeling he had when he first received the letter had now increased dramatically and the musketeer couldn't help but berate himself for how poorly he had taken care of himself since Marsac's death. The guilt of his friend dying by his hand had left him with little desire to eat or train and so he had settled for drinking and sleeping, or attempting to at any rate. Because of this the medic could tell he would not be up to his usual standard should a fight occur and he couldn't rid himself of the thought that a fight **was **going to happen.

* * *

><p>"I don't like this Aramis," muttered D'Artagnan as he observed the meeting point. The area was fairly open and lacked decent hiding spots for the Gascon so he had been forced to wait on a hill, further from the meeting point then either of them would have liked.<p>

"Don't have much of a choice," grumbled the medic as he prepared to head down. He was not comfortable letting the Gascon out of his sight, especially when they had no idea how many people would be

coming to this meeting. Too many things could go wrong and the fact that their mysterious letter sender had insisted on meeting at dusk only made matter worse.

"If I see anything," stressed the Gascon, his worry making his whole frame tense.

Aramis sighed and smiled softly at the young man, "I would expect nothing less," and with that he turned to make his way to the field where the meeting would be taking place.

* * *

><p>As time passed with no sign of anyone Aramis's nerves became increasingly frayed and he couldn't stop his hands from fiddling with his pistol holder and sword hilt.<p>

"Come on," groaned the medic under his breath as he turned to do a visual sweep of the area, and to discretely check on D'Artagnan.

"Apologies musketeer," boomed an unfamiliar voice that had the sharpshooter spinning on his heels to glare at the man who had just emerged from the trees. "I was delayed," he added, his tone so nonchalant he could've easily been talking about the weather rather than being late to a ransom meeting.

"Where is she?" growled Aramis as he fought the urge to punch the smug looking man before him. From the man's clothes Aramis was able to deduce that he was some sort of noble, or at least from a well off family but it was the way the man held himself that worried Aramis. The man had been a musketeer for long enough to register the stance of a fellow military man when he saw it.

"You didn't think I would be stupid enough to bring her here did you?" scoffed the man as he eyed the musketeer with visible distaste.

"The how do I even know she is in your possession?"

The grin that grew on the man's face sent shivers down Aramis's spine but before he could think on it the man was throwing something to him.

Catching the small object with one hand Aramis felt his blood go cold as he instantly recognized the bloodstained locket he now held in his grasp.

"You bastard!" snarled the musketeer as he forced himself to remember that without the man in front of him he had no way of finding his missing friend.

"Ah, ah, ah," chided the man with a knowing smirk that should have been enough of a warning sign for the musketeer had he not been struggling to think through the rage brewing within him. "I wouldn't do that if I were you," stated the man in an annoyingly patronizing singsong voice.

"And why not?" snarled Aramis as he drew his blade and pointed it at the man.

"Because," stated the man with a knowing smirk as he sat on a large boulder, leaning back slightly as he grinned smugly at the now thoroughly confused musketeer before him, "I know you did not come here alone."

It was only from his years of training and experience that allowed the marksman to keep his emotions in check as the man spoke. Internally his heart was beating a mile a minute and he could feel the fear for his young friend growing within him.

"You're mistaken," scoffed Aramis, hoping he could bluff his way through this encounter, "I came alone as instructedâ€¦ Now where is she?"

At his words the man sighed and Aramis felt his internal fear reach all new heights. "I had hoped you would be honest, I do so detest liars."

"Yeah?" spat Aramis with no small amount of venom in his voice, "Well I do so detest people who kidnap and hurt my friends."

"I would watch your tone if I were you," growled the man, his anger at being mocked clear on his face. "Especially as how the girl's life is in my handâ€¦ as is the life of the young man on the hill."

_D'ARTAGNAN! _

"Where is he! What have you done with him!" screamed Aramis as he launched himself at the smug looking man who stopped his attempt by pulling a pistol out from his jacket and pointing it and the musketeer.

"Whatever has befallen the brat," snarled the man as he moved towards the now stationary musketeer, not missing the way Aramis tensed at the slur, "is your own doing. My orders were perfectly clear. You were to come **alone**"

Before Aramis could say anything back his head exploded in pain and darkness rushed to greet him.

4. Playing Catch Up

****Evening My Lovelies!****

****I'll admit I'm not entirely sold on this chapter. It gave me no end of problems to write it (think I ended up spending over a week or two on it thanks to writers block) So I'm apologizing in advance in case you all think it's terrible. ****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - It's only going to get worse for our boys in the coming chapters but Aramis's head will definitely be pounding a bit after that hit. Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Haha yep another cliffy :) Me and cliffhangers have an odd relationship, I hate reading them in other

stories but LOVE writing them in my own (guess thats the evil part of me playing up again lol.) No cliffhanger today though :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - I do so like keeping you all guessing :) Unfortunately no questions will be answered today, today's is a bit of a filler. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jasperslittlesister: Thanks for the review - Today's is a bit of a filler but I promise things will start picking up again tomorrow :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - Oooh I'm glad you like the protective outbursts as much as I do :D We'll be getting plenty more of them as the story progresses :) I'm really hoping my baddy in this story is liked?...hated? (you know what i mean) as much as my others have been. I dont think I have it in me to write a story now where there isnt a puppy pile and snuggly moments lol They're just too cute to ignore. I have referred to D'Art as a little brother in the later chapters and then gone back and changed it as I dont think they're quite there yet... maybe at the end though? With what I have planned that could be a nice cutesy moment to have that dropped into conversation (and have D'Art grinning like a loon) We'll see :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Guest: Thanks for the review - D'Art had claimed that word for a little while thats true lol Oh egg on all you want I'm all for as much whumpage as possible :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - Glad you enjoyed it, today's is a bit of a filler but I felt it was a necessary one as well. Oh Athos (and Porthos) are going to be pissed, but with what I have planned they'll be a bit distracted to really act on that for a bit. In terms of Athos whumpage, unfortunately there wont be any before the weekend, BUT I do promise that what I have planned for him will be worth the wait *grins evilly* As for who the girl is we have a few chapters before we find that out (gotta keep you all on your toes somehow :D) Enjoy the new chapter! x

GingiethSnap: Thanks for the review - Hopefully the wait wasnt too long for you :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - Oh yes, there is a LOT of hurt planned for our boys :D We wont really start seeing it happen for a couple of chapters but it's coming... and it's going to be gloriously evil :D (hopefully I havent gone and bigged it up too much) Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks to you awesome people who follow/favourite/review/read****

****Enjoy! ****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Four: Playing Catch Up
**

"Recon the whelp managed to get 'Mis out of his room yet?" Porthos

asked, barely concealing the hope in his voice as he and Athos made their way back from yet another long day of palace duty. Treville knew neither man wanted to be far from Aramis while the man was grieving, yet he could not justify having them off rotation for that so had come with the compromise of sticking them with palace duty so they were close should the medic need them.

"Probably not," Athos sighed, one hand coming up to rub the back of his neck. "Aramis can be a stubborn mule when he wants to be. Remember how long it took us to get him out of his room after Savoy?"

Porthos visibly winced at the mention of the massacre that nearly ended their brotherhood with the Spaniard before it had ever truly begun. Eager to push those memories aside he said, "True, but the kid's pretty stubborn too," with a wink and sly grin at his friend he added, "would have to be to put up that torture you call a training plan."

Athos sent his brother an offended look, though the glint in his eyes told a different story. "He has potential and wants to learn," he offered by way of explanation for the relentless training he had been forcing upon the boy, "why would I not push him?"

Porthos grinned and knocked the swordsman shoulder, knowing that despite the man's standoffish behavior he was just as fond of the young Gascon as he and Aramis were.

"Maybe we can get 'Mis to show the boy some things with firearms." Porthos suggested after a few moments of silence. "The whelp could do with speeding up his reload rate and lord knows 'Mis needs a healthier distraction then drinking himself into a stupor."

"Perhaps," mused Athos and for the remainder of their journey the pair debated various approaches they could take to get their grieving friend to train their newest pup.

* * *

><p>"Evening men," called Treville as he watched the two tired musketeers enter the garrison.<p>

"Captain," nodded the pair as they moved over to give the man their report of the day's activities.

During the report Treville didn't fail to notice how both men's eyes would drift towards the closed doors of Aramis's rooms.

Unable to help the small fond smile that graced his lips Treville waited until Athos had finished giving the report before he gave them the news that would no doubt perk them up after the dull day they seemed to have.

"He came out today," Treville stated, watching with barely veiled amusement as both men perked up instantly, as predicted.

"He did?" exclaimed Porthos joyfully, knowing that getting the medic out of the gloomy room he had shut himself away in for the last week was the first step towards healing his beloved friend.

Treville nodded, "Not for long but I saw him and D'Artagnan having lunch when I was on my back to my office."

Both Athos and Porthos felt a weight lift off of their shoulders at the Captain's words and now both men were even eager to check up on their friends.

"They're inside?"

Treville shrugged, "I would assume so, they were both gone by the time I left again."

Seeing the impatience growing within his men Treville chuckled softly under his breath before dismissing them and retreating back into his office to finish up the last of the day's paperwork so he could head home.

* * *

><p>"'Mis? D'Artagnan?" Called Porthos as he knocked on the door, his brows furrowing when no response was heard from the inside. Sending a look to Athos, finding the man's features mimicked his own, Porthos opened the door.<p>

The sight that greeted them was Aramis's typically pristine room in complete disarray. While this wouldn't have been worrying normally given the man's tendency to let everything else fall through the cracks when he was dealing with grief and bad memories. It was the things that were noticeably missing that had the two musketeers worried.

"Saddlebag's gone," remarked Porthos with no small amount of concern in his voice as he noticed the small bag Aramis always kept by the door was missing.

"So are his weapons," sighed Athos as he stared into the now empty box that had once housed the medic's weapons. After Marsac's death Athos had taken to locking them away. A large part of him doubted the devout medic would ever consider using them on himself but the swordsman knew a thing or two about being pushed to the brink and he could see the signs in Aramis's eyes so he refused to take any chance with his brother's life.

"So wherever 'e went 'e went willingly"

"Looks that way," nodded Athos, a small frown appearing on his face, "Though it doesn't explain why neither he nor D'Artagnan sent for us."

"No," agreed Porthos, his eyes narrowing as something caught his attention. "But this might," he said, bending down to pick up the piece of paper that had obviously fallen off of the bed at some point. "Whelp's handwritin'," he stated, handing the note to Athos and moving to stand by his side.

The small frown on Athos's face only grew as he remembered D'Artagnan. Why the boy hadn't stopped their friend from leaving or at least had the sense to get him to wait was beyond him but he pushed his frustration aside as he opened the small folded note and

began to read the hurried, broken sentences:

Athos, Porthos

_I can't stop him. He refuses to listen. I'll keep him as safe as I can but please bring backup. More than just our lives may depend on it. _

D'Artagnan

"Well that's helpful," grumbled Porthos as he frowned intently at the note. Clearly D'Artagnan had been rushed to write it but he found himself wishing the young man had written something a bit more helpful.

"There must be more information somewhere, lets get looking," Athos said, his attention already drifting from the conversation and to looking for something to tell them where their missing brothers were.

* * *

><p>"What the hell do the pair of you think you're doing?" exclaimed Treville as he stood in the entrance way of the garrison stables, a lantern in his hand and his eyes narrowing in both question and concern.<p>

"Going after that stupid man before he gets both himself and the whelp killed," grunted Porthos as he struggled to saddle up his horse in the dim lighting the stable's lantern provided.

"What?"

"They're half a day a head of us at least so we'll have to ride through the night to have any hope of catching them." Athos added, either ignorant or ignoring the Captain's confusion at the turn of events.

"Neither of you are going anywhere," commanded Treville, his voice hard and brokering no debate.

"What!" both musketeers roared in anger and confusion as they abandoned the task of preparing their horses to glare at their Captain.

Steeling his gaze as he stared down his men Treville folded his arms in front of his chest. "In case neither of you have noticed its pitch black outside, you wont be able to see a path let alone follow it and if you think I'm about to let either of you ride out in such conditions you're sorely mistaken."

"Aramis â€" Athos snapped, only to be interrupted again by Treville's continued rant.

"Would not want either of you risking your necks by leaving in such conditions. Besides neither of you have rested since you returned from the palace, you're more likely to fall off your horses in exhaustion then be of any actual help to them if they need it." Seeing his men's anger shrink slightly at the logic in his words he sighed, softened slightly and allowed his eyes to lose their

harshness. "Which brings me to my main question as to what the hell is going on?"

Athos and Porthos spent the next several minutes explaining what they had learnt of the trouble Aramis had somehow managed to get himself and D'Artagnan tied up in.

"My office, now." Commanded Treville, harshness returning to his countenance at the knowledge of one of his men and an extremely promising potential recruit were in trouble.

Knowing better to argue with the man when he was as he now was, both Athos and Porthos followed without a word and the trio spent the next hour or so planning out the route the pair would take come morning as well as potential rescue plans, though they would need altering depending on what situation they found their brothers in.

"Get some rest," Treville said softly as they finished the last of their planning and he noticed both men were practically dead on their feet. "I'll inform Serge to have travel rations ready for you come first light but you're no good to anyone when you're a step away from passing out."

Neither man wanted to put off heading out for another second, worry eating them up inside, but they knew the Captain was right and their exhaustion could potentially leave D'Artagnan as the only one capable of getting the two missing men out of wherever they were, both Athos and Porthos were seriously doubting Aramis's thought process and knew that the man's guilt and grief would spur him to act more recklessly then he would normally, even with the addition of D'Artagnan.

Resigning himself to having to force both himself and Porthos to get a couple of hours rest Athos sighed deeply as he gently grabbed the larger man by the elbow and guided him outside. Neither man commenting on the sickening feeling of dread beginning to settle within them.

5. Protectiveness

****Evening My Lovelies****

****I still can't get over the response so far for this story. We're only 5 chapters in and I almost have 50 reviews! You guys are beyond the best and as a thank you for that we get a more intense chapter today :D ****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - Just a bit, though at the moment they're channeling that worry into finding them. Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Yeah I don't see them getting a restful sleep either... probably not a good thing considering what I have planned :D Enjoy the new chapter!

x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Glad you liked it. I didnt want

Athos and Porthos to suddenly be on the trail but good god was it difficult to work past the writers block to actually get them out of the garrison. I fell in love with papa bear Treville in the last story and couldnt resist bringing him back again :D We get to see a bit more of our boys today but I can't promise that'll bring any comfort :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - Glad you think so :) Our boys have a bit of information but not enough to know what they're up against :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the reviews - Oh that was nothing compared to the trouble our Gascon is going to find himself in during later chapters. Treville cares but he wasnt about to risk them... plus it means our other boys get to spend a bit longer in our baddies custody :) Unfortunately for our boys there's going to be lots of worrying moments for them as this story progresses. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jmp (Guest): Thanks for the review - Hmmm out of the many questions you asked this chapter only answers two of them I'm afraid (gotta keep you coming back some how) We'll be learning the names of our baddy and mysterious woman (well nickname in her case) tomorrow but otherwise you've got a couple of chapters until we begin to clear things up. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - Yeah I dont think they'll be getting much either... Shame really, considering what I have planned they could really do with it :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Maryg (Guest): Thanks for the review - I'm glad you're enjoying it so far :) As far as whumping D'Art goes, I've said in previous stories that D'Art wont be the most whumped one but then he somehow ends up that way so it'd be fair to assume he's going to end up fairly hurt here as well (he's just too whumpable) In fact, the first whumpage scene is him getting whumped so who knows... I have some evil plans for several of our other boys but that doesnt mean there's not enough evil in my mind left over for D'Art lol. Glad you've enjoyed the whumpage in my other stories as well :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - That's what I thought :D There's no way Treville wouldnt send them out after them but he needs to know they arent going to get themselves hurt by going in exhausted and unprepared. We get to see a bit more of our boys loyalty today so hopefully you'll like that too :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the reviews - In Aramis's defense he wasn't thinking clearly when he got caught and with D'Art, there was a fight (i just decided not to show it) but we'll be addressing it in a couple of chapters time. I'm sure Athos or Porthos will chastise the boy for not leaving clear instructions when they're back together again. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - Our musketeers have definitely adopted the boy into their little family, even if they haven't outright said it to him yet :) Treville's back to being a watchful papa bear in this story (or at least in the beginning.) The Captain has a more prominent part to play in later chapters which I'm really looking forward to writing but at the moment I'm just enjoying his protectiveness of ensuring they dont hurt themselves by leaving

exhausted and unprepared. I can't see our boys actually getting much in the way of sleep which is a shame as they'll need it for what I have planned :D We get to see our missing boys today and learn a little of their fate. Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks to everyone who follows/favourites/reviews/reads****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

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><p>Chapter Five: Protectiveness
</p></div>

Waking up was not a pleasant experience, before he had even opened his eyes D'Artagnan could already feel the all too familiar pounding in his head that spoke to a concussion. Groaning in pain and not quite yet registering that he could not properly move his arms D'Artagnan forced his eyes to open into slits, allowing them a moment to adjust to the light.

It was at this point that it finally clicked in the young man's mind that he had no idea as to where he was or how he had gotten there... though the pounding of his head coupled with the stickiness he could feel almost certainly answered the latter part of his panicked thoughts.

Forcing himself not to give in to the panic welling up inside him as he pushed aside all memories of the similar situation he had ended up in during the whole Vadim affair, D'Artagnan focused his attention on recalling as much as he possibly could about what happened - a threatening letter, rushed packing, a worried old man, a hill and Aramis's soft smile as he promised to intervene should he spot any danger.

ARAMIS! His mind screamed, causing the young man to lurch forward as far as the chains he didn't realize were holding him would allow. Ignoring the cold bite of metal against his skin D'Artagnan's eyes searched wildly around the bare room for any signs of his brother's presence.

"Bout time you woke up," commented a voice that instantly grabbed the Gascon's attention. "I was beginning to worry we'd hit you too hard."

"W-Who are you?" croaked D'Artagnan wincing slightly at the harshness of his throat; clearly he had been unconscious for more than a little while, a fact that only heightened his worry for his absent friend.

"Not important," shrugged the man as he sauntered into the room and squatted down in front of the Gascon, a curious look growing on his face. "The question I want to know is who ****you **are?**" the man asked as he gripped D'Artagnan by the chin and tilted the boy's head so he could see the damage done to him during his capture. "You bear no markings of a musketeer yet you do not lack skill and so fiercely tried to defend one. We have no intention of hurting those uninvolved so I ask again; who are you and just what are you to the musketeer I

have in my custody?"

'__We?' _contemplated D'Artagnan as he focused on keeping his face from betraying his surprise at the man's slip, _that means more than one. This is going to make escaping more difficult._

D'Artagnan was pulled from his musing by the sharp sting of a slap on his cheek that had his head flinging to the side.

"I asked you a question boy!" snarled the man, clearly not liking being ignored

"Where's Aramis?" spat D'Artagnan, a few specks of blood landing on his captors cheek as he glared at him.

With an air of calm that set D'Artagnan on edge, the man pulled out a white handkerchief and wiped away the blood before standing up.

"Be difficult if you must," remarked the man dismissively as he moved to the door, stopping only when his hand was resting on the handle so he could look over his shoulder and add, "It matters not. I will get my answers one way or another be it from you, the musketeer currently in my custody or," at this he turned more so he could see the panic the young man wasn't able to hide enter his eyes, "- from the two musketeers that will soon be joining us." With a smug smirk at the fear in the Gascon's eyes the man left the room.

* * *

><p>"You sure that's the place?" Porthos asked as he and Athos began the approach to the clearing. After they had located the note from D'Artagnan a search of Aramis's room turned up the threatening letter stating the desired meeting point that lured the two missing men from the garrison.<p>

"Definitely," Athos nodded, his eyes scanning the area with a wariness that only comes from years of service. "Be on your guard."

Porthos held back a sarcastic comment at his brother's words knowing it was just due to the man's protective nature coming to the forefront now that two of theirs were missing.

"I can see why this place was picked," the larger man commented as he observed the location, "only one way for 'Mis to enter without risking an ambush in the woods and the open space meant that any reinforcements he might have brought with him would be too far away to react should anything happen."

"Look at this."

At Athos's call Porthos moved quickly to kneel by his brother, he could feel his brow furrow as he took in the bloodied and broken piece of jewelry in Athos's hand.

"From the woman mentioned in the letter?"

"Possibly," Athos replied absently as he brought the necklace closer for a better look, his own brows furrowing when he saw that engraved on the back of the pendant was a fleur de lis

"What do you make of this?" the swordsman asked as he passed the piece to his brother.

"'Mis likes his women sure but I've never seen him give them a piece like this."

"Maybe she's not **his **woman."

"She's obviously important to him otherwise they wouldn't have threatened him with her safety. Maybe she's a daughter of one of the retired men, could explain how 'Mis knows her and why she has something with the musketeer symbol on."

"Treville has ordered him to stay away from any of them but who can say if he abided by that. Either way we'll find out when we find them."

"True enough," sighed Porthos as he rose to his feet, "the fact that neither of them are here yet that is, is not a good sign though."

"It's getting late and whoever is involved in all of this cleared up their tracks well. There's a village an hour or two that way maybe we'll find more information there."

Porthos shrugged, trying desperately to clamp down on the growing worry eating at him, "A couple of musketeers in this area would definitely garner attention, people would remember them if they were there but we should check out that first," he said pointing at the hill, "No way the whelp would let 'Mis come here alone and that's the only place that would provide adequate cover for him."

Athos nodded, pocketing the broken necklace before gesturing for Porthos to lead the way.

* * *

><p>"So do you feel like breaking this vow of silence yet?" queried a voice that drew a chained Aramis from his silent prayers. Opening his eyes the medic glared harshly at the man before closing them and returning to the unfinished prayers.<p>

The man observed the Spaniard for a few moments before letting the smug smile he had worn as he left the younger man's room return.

"If you won't talk willingly I'll just have to get the information another way," he stated so casually one wouldn't think he was making threats about torture.

"Do your worst," spat Aramis as he glared at the man once again, "Musketeers don't break easily and certainly not to monsters like you."

"This is true," nodded the man with a smirk that both confused and worried the sharpshooter. "But then that boy with you," Aramis felt his heart stop, "He is no musketeer. I wonder how long it would take him to break."

"DON'T YOU DARE TOUCH HIM!" roared Aramis as he flung himself at the

man as far as his chains would allow, ignoring the pain it caused him.

"So you do care for him," smirked the man and Aramis cursed internally as he realized he had just handed the man another piece of leverage over him.

"Who is he to you?" the man mused, mostly to himself yet Aramis could not push down the fear gripping him.

He cursed his recklessness in ignoring D'Artagnan's wish to wait for the brothers before following the letter's instructions. Had Athos and Porthos been there the medic doubted D'Artagnan would have been overwhelmed meaning their current positions would be reversed and it would be them questioning the man rather than the situation they now found themselves in. Aramis knew his grief over Marsac coupled with the threatening letter had pushed him to act with more impulsiveness and recklessness than he normally would have done and whilst he would have no issue with that had it only affect him, he now had D'Artagnan in peril for his actions.

"A lover perhaps?" mused the man as he closely observed the medic's face for a reaction.

Aramis couldn't help himself and snorted, "Really?" he asked with barely hidden amusement, "that's the first thing that came to mind?"

"After the way he fought to reach you? Hardly a leap." Shrugged the man and he didn't fail to note the small look of pride that entered the musketeer's eyes.

"Ah," nodded the man, the pieces coming into place in his mind and he could see the wary curiosity on the chained musketeer's face. "A 'brother' then," he stated though he practically spat the word brother. "A recruit of sorts, not yet a full musketeer but clearly one in all but title and name as far as your concerned am I right?"

Aramis only response was to glare daggers at the man, causing him to chuckle darkly as he realized his assessment was correct.

"I wonderâ€¦"

"What now?" huffed Aramis as he tried to move into a slightly more comfortable position. He had no doubt things would get painful for him soon so he was fully intent on remaining as comfortable as possible for as long as possible.

"The boy is clearly important to youâ€¦"

"We've covered this," reminded the medic, his voice heavy with disdain and hatred as he fought against the urge to spit in the man's face.

"Is he equally as important to the other two? Are they more important to you than him?"

Aramis felt his blood turn to ice and his heart stop, "O-Other two?"

The man nodded, his smirk returning, "the two musketeers who have been on our trail for a good few hours now." Seeing the flash of hope enter the musketeer's eyes at this piece of information the man couldn't help the sick pleasure he took in snuffing it out and replacing it with fear. "Don't worry about answering though, I'll be finding out for myself as soon as they join us. Shouldn't be long now."

6. A Reunion Of Sorts

****Evening My Lovelies!****

****60 Reviews!** wow you guys are awesome. I'm hoping this chapter is a worthy thanks for all your continued support. We have some questions answered (or half answered), a flash back... and my personal favourite a mini rant from our favourite medic :D**

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - Unfortunately they'll be hanging on for a while. Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Oh that made me laugh :D and produced some rather lovely mental imagery which is slightly distracting lol. On the plus side though I don't keep you waiting too long whenever there are cliffhangers. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Glad you're liking/hating him so far. The hate-o-meter will definitely be needed soon (chapter 8) we may also need the angst-o-meter for that chapter as well. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - They have their suspicions but worry about our missing boys is overwhelming that. Aramis will definitely come to regret that, more so in later chapters once the whumpage has really begun. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - Yeah it wont be easy but he's trying. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jmp (Guest): Thanks for the review - Good :) means I'm doing my job right :D You'll have a name to put to the hate today and I'm afraid that in the coming chapters your hate will only grow. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - And I love the daily reviews :D They make boring days at work more bearable. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Maryg (Guest): Thanks for the review - Yay I'm really pleased you think so. Things are going to start heating up drama and whumpage wise in the next few chapters so hopefully it'll continue to get better. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - He does indeed, I'll be addressing just how he knows so much in a later chapter, it means nothing good for our boys but will hopefully at to the drama and

whumpage which is always good :) Loved writing those protective outbursts so I'm glad you liked them, our lovely medic is going to be forced to start thinking more clearly in the coming chapters. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the review - Hmmm can't really say anything for that as it's the focus of today's chapter but I can talk about Aramis :) He's going to be suffering quite badly on the emotional side in this story, especially in later chapters... He's still going to get physically whumped as well of course but I have some serious emotional blows for him to endure in later chapters. Glad you liked their protective moments, I really enjoyed writing them. Enjoy the new chapter! x

MicheeO: Thanks for the reviews - Your reviews weren't for this last chapter but I'm far too lazy to go back and add the replies to those chapters. I was beginning to think you weren't going to review, or read, which would be poor form on your part considering the nagging you did to get me to start publishing this lol :) Haha Glad you're hooked though and don't worry I'm updating daily so you won't be left hanging for long once you've caught up :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - I can't see D'Art not finding the similarities between the whole Vadim situation and the situation he found himself in when he awoke and as the Vadim thing would still be fairly fresh in his mind I could see it freaking him out a bit so I'm glad you liked it. It might get brought up a few more times so hopefully it won't become annoying. We'll be putting a name to our new baddy today as well as a nickname to our mysterious woman. Our new baddy has some low views on musketeers as you'll notice in coming chapters hence his disdain for the term brothers and for thinking him and D'Art to be lovers. Glad you liked the protective moments, they're always good fun to write... and imagine... and swoon over... ANYWAYS... We'll be seeing some more of them soon and even get one today, though not roar inducing I'm afraid (tomorrow there'll be one I promise :D) Hopefully this chapter is worth the anticipation built up. Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks for the continued support by following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Six: A Reunion... Of Sorts.
**

Athos was aware something wasn't right as soon as his mind began to wake up. The man was well known in the regiment and amongst his friends for his habit of drinking himself into a stupor every night in a bid to banish bad memories and dreams. As such the morose musketeer was immediately able to tell that the rigorous pounding in his head was not the result of yet another evening's overindulgence in drink, but rather the by-product of something more sinister.

Willing his heartbeat and breathing to remain calm and steady Athos

took a moment to let his mind push out the last remaining bits of fog and to let his other senses pick up clues that may alert him as to where he was.

The first thing that caught his attention was the clinking of chains, clearly wherever he was, he was not there willingly. Though one could argue that the pounding in his head and irritating dryness of his throat was also a clear indication of that fact.

The second thing that caught his attention was the smell, or lack of it. His prison obviously hadn't been used much as there were no lingering smells such as the stench of body odour or any medicinal smells, which would indicate a captive, had been treated.

The third and most grabbing thing that caught his attention was the sound of a familiar voice hissing out his name.

"Athos!" The voice hissed irritation clear in its tone; clearly the swordsman had spent longer assessing the situation than he had anticipated. "I know you're awake damn you now open your eyes!"

"Aramis," nodded Athos after he eventually opened his eyes, allowing his stoic mask to falter for just a second at the sight of one of his dearest friends hanging from chains before the mask returned.

"He nods!" exclaimed the medic more to himself than to Athos who merely watches with fond amusement as the Spaniard continued his rant. "He **finally **comes to after being drugged with God knows what, finds both my lovely self and him chained in a room and all he does is nod!"

"Are you done?"

Aramis shot a glare at the completely unbothered man before shrugging as best as he could given the chains, "Hardly, I could go on but I figure our host will be visiting us shortly so I'm sure you have more important things you wish to discuss before that happens."

Athos couldn't help the smirk that blossomed then, the Aramis before him, despite being chained and slightly bruised, was acting more like himself than he had since Marsac.

"Understanding what this is all about would be a nice start," Athos stated, raising one eyebrow at his chained friend in silent acknowledgement that he was not pleased with the man's rashness that had landed them all in this state. Acting out of grief was something he understood all too well, though he had also learnt the consequences of doing so the hard way when his reluctance to visit his childhood home almost cost Porthos his life. Athos had no intention of letting Aramis's grief endanger them more than it already had.

Clearly the medic understood the silent scolding as his head fell to his chest and Athos could see the grief warring with guilt and shame clouding his eyes.

"You are unharmed?" Athos questioned gently though despite this his eyes held a promise of pain to their captor should the answer be not to his liking.

Aramis let out a broken huff of laughter, "Our host is generous it seems, this is the worst he's done to me so far," explained the medic as he tilted his head to the side to show the bruise forming from the knock he took upon his capture.

Seeing Athos's eyes darken at the injury Aramis felt his heart warm, "I am well mon ami" Much better than I expected to be given our present situation."

"And D'Artagnan?" enquired Athos as he pushed aside the vindictive side of him that wanted nothing more than to cause equal hurt to their captor. His dark expression remained however when Aramis allowed his worry and sadness to return to his eyes.

"I don't know," said the medic softly unable to look his friend in the eye out of fear of the anger and disappointment he thought he would see for having put both himself and the man's protégé in danger. "I know he lives as our host has made mention of him the several times he's been to question me, but for as to how he fares I have no idea."

Athos sighed, barely biting back a growl that wanted to be released as frustration and anger threatened to take hold. "So what is this all about?" he asked, pushing himself up into a better sitting position slightly clumsily as last remnants of the drug remained in his system.

"How'd they get you anyway?" Aramis asked, worry about his brother's state forcing him to push aside the request for information.

Athos sighed still feeling slightly out of it from whatever they had been given, "A promise of information and some drugged wine it would seem."

"Okay"

Athos knew that snippet of information wouldn't be enough for his noseey friend so he sighed once again before explaining how both he and Porthos had been caught.

* * *

<p>FLASH BACK

"__Don't see us getting much information here 'Thos," Porthos said, keeping his voice low as his eyes scanned their surroundings. "Place looks deserted."__

__Athos couldn't help the niggling feeling of dread beginning to settle within him that only strengthened at Porthos's words. "Regardless we will try," he stated, his voice dripping with authority he didn't even need to use given the present company. Without saying another word he direct them towards what appeared to be the local tavern. __

__Entering the tavern both men were pleased to see several other people already there, both musketeers' had a bad feeling about the lack of people in the village but found themselves relaxing slightly at the sight of several people.__

_"__Evening gents," called a bright feminine voice, "Make yourselves at home, what can I get'cha?"_

_Once they had ordered a couple of bowls of stew and some wine the musketeers began quietly debating over the information they had gathered so far. _

_"__Should we inform the Captain?" Porthos asked mid chew_

Athos shook his head, "We don't have enough information to take to him yet."

_"__But 'Mis and the whelp are clearly in trouble."_

_"__We knew that coming here. Without anything more solid the Captain wont be able to act, or even send anyone else here to help out." Sighing Athos took a large swig of his wine. "We're on our own for now my friend."_

_"__I don't like this," grumbled Porthos a few moments later, drawing a sympathetic breathy chuckle from his companion. _

_Athos would have said more had a shout from a man a couple of tables away from them caught their attention. _

_"__I'm telling you there was musketeer! He had the pauldron-thing and everything!" _

Sharing a brief look with Porthos both men stood, leaving their food and drink unguarded, and made their way over to the table where a couple of young men sat.

_"__Look there's more!" exclaimed the man who had shouted earlier. Due to the man's youthful age and his excited look Porthos deduced the man was enamored by the idea of the King's musketeers._

_"__You mentioned another musketeer?" Porthos said hesitantly, leaving Athos to silently observe the men. "Was he in the company of a young man? Would be slightly younger then yourselves?"_

_The man thought about it for a moment before nodding, not missing the hope that entered both men's eyes. _

_"__Why don't you join us and I'll tell you everything I know."_

_Athos's wary nature was screaming at him not to accept but a larger part of him was telling him that this was for Aramis and D'Artagnanâ€¦ For that reason alone he nodded and the two men went back to get their food and wine before joining the men. _

It was several minutes into their discussion that Athos realized his earlier paranoia was correct as his vision began to blur and he could feel his body swaying dangerously.

END FLASH BACK

* * *

><p>"And then I woke up here," Athos stated, his voice so nonchalant that had Aramis not known the man he would assume the drugs were still affecting him. "I'm assuming, since Porthos is not here, that he is wherever D'Artagnan is being kept."<p>

"Well I'm glad to see the musketeers don't employ idiots." Remarked a voice interrupting Aramis before he could even speak. "Then again," mused the man, "You did allow yourselves to be drugged so maybeâ€|"

"We hardly allowed anything," stated Athos as he scowled at the newcomer. "Care to tell us who the hell you are and why we're here?"

"You may call me Marcel," nodded the man before he turned his gaze on the much more immobile Spaniard. "As for why you are hereâ€| Well your friend here has some information I want. The rest of you are merely leverage. I would have preferred not to involve the petit chiot but he refused to stand down when the offer was made to him so I can't be held accountable for anything that happens to him."

Athos allowed himself a small prideful smirk at the man's words about D'Artagnan. He had known since reading the boy's rushed note that the Gascon had no intention on letting the Spaniard handle this alone.

"And Viv!?" snap the Spaniard as he fought against his chains as much as he could. "What had you done with her?"

"She lives," shrugged Marcel, clearly unbothered by the medic's anger.

Athos fought to keep his face impartial, no need for the man to know how little he knew about what was going on. Though by the pained look in his brother's eyes, the woman was important and that was all he needed to know.

Marcel continued to question Aramis for several hours with the medic refusing to give up any information or even to speak if it wasn't a sarcastic comment.

"Maybe you'd be more talkative with the right motivation." Marcel mused, turning to Athos he added, "Clearly your safety isn't enough for him," and with that he moved to the door.

7. A Reunion Of Sorts II

****Evening My Lovelies!****

****We get to see our missing Gascon as well as Porthos today and lets just say things are not looking good :D****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - Hehe Glad you liked it :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Good to know you have the meters ready, we're going to need them. This whole situation is forcing

Aramis to push through his grief which is allowing his snarky side to come out on occasion. We get a little bit more banter today, though its on the concerned side. Enjoy the new chapter! x

watlocked: Thanks for the reviews - Glad to have you back :) With regards to D'Arts bossy side it'll appear on occasion but he's not completely comfortable around our muskys yet so he'll be a bit awkward about doing so. Our boys are definitely learning the hard way not to ignore gut feelings (you would have thought they would have learnt by now) Athos will most likely have things to say to Aramis and D'Art but for now he has more important to worry about. Rants are always fun :D This story will have plenty of them :) Hehe glad you're liking/hating the villain. I'm really happy you're enjoying the story so far, hopefully you'll continue to do so as the story progresses (especially as we're beginning to get into whumpage) We've got some serious emotional whumpage coming Aramis's way in later chapters, I'm actually feeling quite bad for having it planned. Haha Now I'm just imagining Marcel as a bird XD Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Oh yeah they're definitely feeling a bit sheepish for getting drugged. Whumpage is beginning to start now though more so in tomorrows chapter. Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - That pride will probably be replaced with exasperation during chapter 11, our pup's having another reckless moment. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Katie (Guest): Thanks for the review - :D Thank you for the kind words and I'm really happy you're enjoying the story so far. Oh in that case you'll probably hate me today as well... Sorry! Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - Hehe Glad you liked it, I really liked writing their bit. You are quite right to worry about D'Art but you'll see more of why tomorrow. As for the woman we'll find out who she is during chapter 9. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - Haha glad you liked it, I loved writing the Aramis/Athos moment during that chapter. You're right to be anxious though we'll be seeing more whumpage tomorrow. Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always many thanks and much love for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Seven: A Reunion... Of Sorts II
**

"How bad?" Porthos asked with no small amount of concern in his voice as he watched the young Gascon wince with pain as he fidgeted on the floor.

D'Artagnan raised a questioning eyebrow, "Shouldn't I be asking you that? I'm not the one who was drugged then dragged all the way

here."

"True," Porthos nodded, a small smile at the boy's cheek threatening to form only to be pushed down by yet another wince of pain from the young man. "But you are the one who looks like he took quite a beating," he added nodding to the several dark bruises marring the young man's face.

D'Artagnan had he sense to look sheepish then, clearly not having realized how battered he actually looked. "It's nothing I can't handle," he said, barely holding back another wince, "I'm fine."

Porthos sighed and leveled any further 'assurances' with a stern look, "Kid, we stopped believing your 'I'm fines' after you collapsed into our arms after the whole Vadim incident."

D'Artagnan winced again, only this time it was from memory not pain and it was then Porthos's turn to look sheepish. The musketeer knew how shaken up the whole incident had left the boy, not that any of them blamed him, getting strapped to barrels of gunpowder and left for dead would do that to anybody.

The young Gascon had been adamant when they met up afterwards that, apart from being a little shaky, he was fine. Only to then pale dramatically over the next few minutes before passing out in Porthos's very worried arms. When they had finally managed to get the Gascon back to Athos's rooms for treatment they found that not only was he suffering from multiple blows to the head but his wrists were shredded, his shoes practically melted onto his feet and more than a couple of his ribs were broken... All in all the musketeers had learnt never to fully trust the boy's assessment of his health again after that point.

"It's nothing," D'Artagnan reiterated, not looking Porthos in the eye as he mentally shook off the remnants of that memory, "We have more important things to worry about then me at the moment."

"Listen whelp," scolded Porthos, the drumming in his own head only heightening the annoyance he was feeling at D'Artagnan's continued dismissal. "We both know I'm not about to give this up so I'll say again. How bad?"

D'Artagnan scowled at the older man, though there was very little true anger behind it. "Ribs," he admitted after a few moments of silence, "He managed to get in a few good shots before he decided to knock me out."

Porthos's eyes filled with sympathy, no wonder the boy kept flinching. "Broken?"

"Probably," D'Artagnan admitted with a resigned sigh, only to curse under his breath as pain shot through him. "Hurts when I breathe so I'm going with yeah."

"How'd 'e get the best of you anyways whelp?"

Porthos felt his eyebrows raise in question when D'Artagnan looked sheepish yet again.

"Iâ€| was distracted." He admitted quietly

"By?" Porthos asked, though he already had a feeling he knew the answer.

"Aramis," D'Artagnan admitted, hating that what he was about to say would insinuate he lacked faith in his friend but also knowing in his heart that Porthos needed to know. "He'sâ€| not been thinking clearly. I know you all say I'm too rash and hot-headed at times but he was ready to leave without backup or a note. Had I not been there when the letter was received Aramis would have left the garrison straight away without saying anything to anyone. I didn't want whoever was behind all of this to get the better of him because his grief and worry were making it hard for him to think straight."

"So you decided not to think straight by worryin' bout 'im."

"Iâ€| "

"S'alright whelp," said Porthos reassuringly when he saw the expression on D'Artagnan's face. "We've all been there."

D'Artagnan let out a breath he hadn't even noticed he had been holding. The young man was sure Porthos was going to be angry with him, so to learn he wasn't, was a huge relief to the battered young man.

Unable to resist teasing the boy a little bit when he saw the obvious relief in his eyes Porthos added, "Course 'Thos'll probably be 'aving you do extra training so you don't get 'distracted' again."

Watching the alarm grow on the young man's face at the thought of even sterner training sessions was completely worth the jab in Porthos's opinion, as was the glare he received when he was no longer able to contain his laughter.

Both men abruptly froze however when they heard the sound of a key turning in the lock of their cell door.

"Don't stop on my account," smirked the man as he sauntered into the room, his smirk only grew when he saw the glares being directed his way by both men.

"You gonna tell us why you 'ave us chained up or are you just here to admire the view?" grouched Porthos, his question drawing a raised eyebrow from D'Artagnan and a small falter of the smirk from the new arrival.

"Straight to business then I see. My name is Marcel and you are here to helpâ€| 'persuade' that Spanish friend of yours to give me the information I seek."

Porthos actually snorted at that, a smirk of his own growing as he looked at the confused face of their captor. "And how's that goin' for ya?" he asked with barely veiled amusement.

"Your friend is remarkably stubborn," admitted Marcel, "I do not wish to resort to violence, hence your own presence here, but I will should he continue to refuse answering my questions."

Both men felt a small weight lift off of them at the knowledge that Aramis had not been physically harmed since being captured, though the threat of violence upon their friend was enough to have both men wary.

"We can hardly get him to talk if we're locked in here now can we?" sniped D'Artagnan, hoping his plan would actually pay off. He knew that to move them into another room the chains keeping them would need to be removed, at that point they could try their luck at overpowering the single man.

Porthos caught on to D'Artagnan's plan straight away and while he was all for it he was also worried about the young man's ability to actually go through with it, he was struggling just to sit there without showing pain so Porthos was questioning his ability to fight.

Marcel eyed the pair for a moment before seemingly agreeing to the Gascon's comment.

"This is true," he nodded not missing the pleased smirk that graced the young man's face for a moment before he was able to hide it. "Plus it will be interesting to see if your condition draws some emotion from your stone faced friend."

D'Artagnan's brows furrowed in confusion, '_his condition?_' sure he was looking fairly beat up butâ€¦

Before D'Artagnan could finish that thought Marcel was right in front of him and a sickly sweet smelling cloth was being pressed against his nose and mouth causing him to ignore the pain in his ribs as he struggled against the man's hold.

"D'ARTAGNAN!" bellowed Porthos as he watched in horror as the boy's struggles became weaker and weaker until he was slumped forward against his chains.

"What the hell did you do to him?"

"Relax, he's just unconscious," said Marcel as he patted the unconscious Gascon's cheek. Deeming him to be fully under and not faking the man moved to unlock him from his chains, only to then tie his wrists together using some rope.

"He's 'ardly fighting back, why bother with the ropes?" snapped Porthos, his eyes never leaving D'Artagnan's slumped form.

Marcel laughed, "And what of when he wakes? I am not stupid musketeer. Now are you going to co-operate?" he asked holding up a pair of cuffs, "I would dearly hate for something to happen to the boy when he so defenseless."

Scowling at the threat to his newest and youngest brother Porthos bit his cheek and nodded, glaring daggers at Marcel when he had the audacity to smirk at him.

* * *

><p>At the sound of the door opening both Aramis and Athos put a stop

to their hushed conversation though neither man could help the widening of their eyes as Porthos was pushed into the room.<p>

"Porthos!" Aramis exclaimed, pulling at his restraints as much as he could.

"Howâ€¦" Athos began to ask only to be cut off by the very pissed off musketeer.

"I'm good," he grunted turning to glare over his shoulder at Marcel who was slowly making his way into the room. "It's the whelp we need to worry bout," he added quietly so only his brothers' heard him.

"D'Artagnan!" Cried Aramis as he watched Marcel lift the unconscious boy off of his shoulders and place him on the floor.

"If you have harmed him," snarled Athos, surprising both musketeers slightly with the danger his voice promised.

"Ahh," grinned Marcel as he moved to chain Porthos's cuffs to the wall, "Not so stone-cold after all I see." Athos's only response was to glare at the man.

"Now that we're all here how about you get around to telling me what I want to know?" he stated, staring hard at Aramis.

If anything Aramis's glare turned even deadlier, "I told you, I have no idea what you're talking about. Why don't you get that through your thick skull already!"

Realizing all of Marcel's attention was on Aramis, Porthos turned to face Athos whose attention kept flickering between the three men. Once he managed to get the swordsman's attention Porthos mouthed _What? _

Grimacing slightly Athos allowed his attention to quickly flicker back to Aramis and Marcel who seemed to be silently glaring daggers at each other before he turned back to Porthos and mouthed a single word reply. _Marsac._

_Well shit _Porthos internally winced; no wonder Aramis was so high-strung.

"Enough of this!" Snarled Marcel as he backhanded the medic, the action drawing the complete attention of the group, allowing for the small stir from D'Artagnan to go unnoticed.

"Marsac wouldn't have risked returning to Paris unless he was certain and as his friend you would be the only one he confided in."

"Why do you care about Marsac's reasons anyway?" Athos growled, hoping to take the attention off of Aramis for at least a moment so the medic could compose himself. The mention of him being Marsac's friend had brought back the guilt and grief the sharpshooter had, up to this point, pushed to one side.

"He had answers I want," snapped Marcel, his calm slipping dangerously fast. "With him dead my only option is to confront those

he would have confided in. The girl was no help, though she did resist quite admirably before giving up your friend here."

"Son of a," snarled Aramis, "Where is she!"

"Talk and maybe I'll tell you."

While the focus was once again on Aramis, none of the rooms other occupants noticed the quiet struggles coming from D'Artagnan as the boy worked to pull himself free of his bindings, fervently ignoring the shredded skin on his wrists and the blood his actions produced.

Once he was clear D'Artagnan shakily stood, thankful that Marcel had placed him behind everyone else so no one was reacting to him just yet. Wrapping one bloodied arm around his torso in an attempt to support his broken ribs the Gascon allowed himself a moment to assess the situation.

Only to then ignore any semblance of proper planning when he saw their captor punch Aramis in the stomach, successfully knocking the wind out of him.

At his friend's pained grunt D'Artagnan launched himself at Marcel.

8. Consequences Of Reckless Actions

****Evening My Lovelies!****

****We're finally getting to some proper whumpage now yay!****

****Also I've realized that the general response to last nights chapter was to simply facepalm at D'Arts actions lol XD****

****Even better than that is the fact that we're almost at 100 reviews! ALREADY! You guys are totally awesome! ****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - In D'Arts defense he's not been there long enough to have Athos hammer in that head over heart lesson properly (though our 'Thos will be making sure it sinks in by the end of this story I think) There's definitely some pain coming D'Arts way. Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - They're a bit too worried to be angry but no doubt that'll come later :) Oh and we'll probably be needing hate-o-meter for Marcel's actions today :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - We're learning a bit more as to how all this is related to Marsac today. D'Art is trying to help... not doing an overall good job of it but his heart's in the right place. Enjoy the new chapter! x

romirola: Thanks for the review - We're starting the whumpage today :D Glad you're liking it so far. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Katie (Guest): Thanks for the review - I know, I'm so mean with the cliffhangers :) There's not really one today though so that's a good thing. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Deana: Thanks for the review - Glad you liked it, D'Arts in for some more pain today. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - D'Arts a quick study in everything but that lesson unfortunately, Athos will be stressing it again later in this story. Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Hmmm that's very true. Enjoy the new chapter! x

MoonlightTaylor (Guest): Thanks for the review - Yay I'm glad you think so :) I'm always worried they might come across out of character, especially this story as they haven't known each other as long and have the bond they gain so it's always good to hear they're in character :D We'll be finding out what Marcel wants today. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the reviews - We'll be finding out what Marcel wants today, as for who Viv is... we've got one more chapter till we learn who she is but yeah she's still alive. You'll be finding out D'Arts fate straight away today, I won't keep you waiting too long. It's quite interesting you've asked about me writing a Vadim fic as the idea has been growing lately, especially as I keep referencing it in this story, so absolutely I will definitely write it :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - D'Arts really not in any condition to be tackling a guy, but hey when has that stopped him before :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Maryg (Guest): Thanks for the review - I could never make you all wait too long for my updates, mainly as it counteracts my cliffhangers lol Gotta love D'Art getting himself in stressful situations and not quite thinking things through. Really glad you're liking the story so far, hopefully you'll continue to do so now the whumpage has started :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

MicheeO: Thanks for the reviews - You've caught up! :D I do so enjoy leaving you all guessing. I get the feeling I should be concerned about my state of mind considering how much I enjoy writing all the whumpage and torture scenes lol but yeah we've got some torture/whumpage moments on the way :D And yeah, you'd think by now he would have learnt that but fortunately for my evil mind he has not so I still get to write my evil whumpage moments :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - We get another instant of unconscious D'Art here as well, plus an almost snuggly moment (I can't quite decide as to whether it counts as a snuggly one or not) Glad you liked the chloroform bit, I wanted to do something I haven't done before (which I don't think is much lol) Plus he's already been knocked out once, probably not good to have him knocked out again so soon. I love writing Athos's protective moments, especially as it's still early on in their relationship, though I kinda feel he was always fond of the pup, it just became easier to show it the longer he was with them. Oh his recklessness is definitely going to cost him

mwhahaha :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Eight: Consequences Of Reckless Actions

The three musketeers were adamant that they would remember the sickening screams of their newest brother for quite some time after the boy's well meaning attempt to overpower their captor went horribly wrong.

In retrospect the plan had been a good one, as far as the Gascon had been able to tell no one had noticed him awake and free until he was running at the turned back of Marcel.

Unfortunately Marcel had been a solidier and as such had many years of experience over his young attacker, allowing him to grab his wrist and twist it behind the boy's back with such speed and force that it ended up dislocating the young man's shoulder.

D'Artagnan screamed, his eyes scrunched in pain as he desperately tried to get away from the vice like grip on his arm without jarring the injured joint too badly.

"D'ARTAGNAN!" cried the three musketeers as one, their eyes wide with horror and worry.

"You're ten years to early to get the jump on me kid," growled Marcel, his mouth low towards D'Artagnan's ear so only the Gascon could hear him.

"I'll ask again Spaniard," said Marcel, his voice loud enough now to catch all of the room's occupant's attention though his focus was on Aramis and his grip on D'Artagnan remained crushingly strong. "What proof did Marsac have or find about Savoy that brought him back to Paris?"

When Aramis refused to answer, his eyes wide with guilt and refusing to leave the pale face of his new little brother, Marcel sighed.

"Have it your way then," and with a precision that could only come from experience Marcel sharply twisted D'Artagnan's arm and before long the room was filled with the sickening snap of bone followed by D'Artagnan's harsh and heart-breaking cries.

"Te voy a matar a este hijo de puta!" (_I'll kill you for this you son of a bitch!)_

Once he was sure the boy wasn't about to pass out from the pain of his injuries Marcel released his bruising grip on the boy and allowed him to crumple to the floor, a small whimper of pain escaping him as he clutched his now useless arm to his chest.

Turning back to the medic he met the man's glare with one of his own. "I warned you things would get painful if you continued to evade my questions. I only wonder how many people you supposedly care about will have to be hurt before you stop playing games."

At his words Aramis's eyes once again filled with guilt, as they took in the shaking form of D'Artagnan who sat crumpled near his feet. The soldier in him wanted to give Marcel nothing whilst the medic and older brother part of him wanted to do whatever it took to ensure that no more pain came to his brothers.

Seeing this war going on behind the marksman's eyes Marcel said, "I'll give you a couple of hours to debate your options, but remember, continue to give me nothing and it will be they who pay for your silence."

"Why do you care about Savoy anyway!" screamed Aramis as his bloodied wrists once again fought against the chains.

"I care," snarled Marcel, a terrifying look of anger crossing his face, "because that 'training mission' cost me my brother-in-law. My nephew lost his father and my baby sister became a widow who sank so far in her grief she could no longer continue living, leaving her then two-year-old son an orphan. Savoy destroyed my family and I will do whatever it takes to find whoever was responsible and gut them like the murderous pigs they are!"

Once the outburst was over Marcel all but stormed out of the room and within seconds all the emotionless masks fell from the musketeers' faces, each of them now looking upon their newest member with mixes of guilt, sympathy, anger and concern.

Athos broke the silence first, "You with us D'Artagnan?"

D'Artagnan grunted in pain but lifted his head to look his mentor in the eye, forcing a rather tight looking smile onto his face the boy responded by saying, "Iâ€¦ don't suppose this is one of the times you'd believe me if I said I'm fine?"

Porthos who had been the only other one present when they had discussed this earlier chuckled lightly, his laughter only serving to confuse the other two musketeers further. "Thought I told ya we never believe those anymore," he teased lightly though the concern and worry were still brewing in his eyes.

D'Artagnan released a short breathy chuckle, only stopping when a stab of pain shot through him. "Worth a shot," he shrugged, "I-In that caseâ€¦ I'm really not fine at all."

"Glad you're being honest for once whelp."

"S-Sorry it failed," D'Artagnan grunted as he tried to move into a more comfortable position without jarring his arm too much, "Really thought I had the jump on him then."

"It was a good idea," nodded Athos as he silently took in the boy's expression to gauge how much pain the boy was actually in.

"Why are you apologizing?" Aramis whispered brokenly, interrupting any other words of comfort that might have been coming from the other

two men.

"What?" sighed D'Artagnan tiredly, clearly the pain was beginning to affect him a bit more now.

"This is my fault. How are you not angry and screaming right now?"

"I think," stated Athos, pulling both men out of what promised to be quite the lengthy and awkward conversation, "the more pressing issue is to tend to his arm before it gets worse."

Athos felt slightly guilty for his words when he noticed the instant paling the young Gascon did at the mere mention of it getting worse.

"And how do you propose we do that?" snapped Aramis, guilt and grief making his words much sharper than he had intended.

Ignoring the medic's tone Athos turned his attention back to D'Artagnan who was staring at him as if awaiting instruction. "Can you move?" he asked gently, aware that what he was about to ask him to do would cause the boy a great deal of pain and most likely cause him to pass out.

"Probably not fast," admitted D'Artagnan with a slight smile that came out as more of a grimace, "what do you need me to do?"

Smiling softly at the boy's strength of will Athos began his instruction. "The position that Aramis is chained in means he'll be of little physical help for this but both me and Porthos have slightly more mobility in our arms so if you move to one of us we can see about getting that shoulder back into place."

"Oh joy," sighed D'Artagnan sarcastically before grunting in pain as he forced himself to stand, his good arm keeping his broken one tight against his chest. After a few minutes of quite colourful under-the-breath swearing D'Artagnan was situated in front of Athos with a slightly fearful yet completely determined look on his face.

"I won't lie to you," said Athos softly as he mentally assessed the best way to set the arm, "This is really going to hurt."

"Figured as much," grunted D'Artagnan through gritted teeth, though his fear was all too clear in his eyes for Athos to miss.

Placing a gentle hand on the boy's hair, startling him slightly, Athos offered him the most reassuring look he could muster before moving his hands to the Gascon's arm. "If you need to pass out, do it, no one will think any less of you."

Unable to talk through the nervousness that came from anticipating the pain D'Artagnan squeezed his eyes shut and gave one sharp nod in response.

Refusing to wait any longer Athos quickly forced the dislocated joint back into its socket before moving quickly to catch D'Artagnan who, true to expectations, had passed out, the pain of all of his injuries finally becoming too much for him. Thankfully Athos's chain gave the

musketeer a fair amount of mobility so he was able to situate the boy so he was lying with his head resting in the musketeer's lap, an act that brought soft smiles to the faces of the room's other occupants, despite the situation.

"Aint there anything we can do bout the bone?" Porthos asked sadly as he took in the lines of pain on D'Artagnan's face that were still prominent despite being unconscious.

Aramis sighed, "Not without something to splint it with or without something to make a sling out of. We'll just have to hope we can get out of here before too long. I'm the reason that arm's broken anyway I really don't want to have to be the one to re-break it."

"We need a plan," Athos stated, his fingers absent-mindedly running their way through D'Artagnan's hair in such a soothing, familial way that both Aramis and Porthos would have questioned it if it didn't seem to be helping both men relax as well.

"Well I can't give him what he wants," Aramis sighed. "You heard what he wants to do to those responsible and while there are some involved I'd gladly let him have, there's no way to do that without giving up those I can't see harmed."

Neither man missed the obvious anger in their friend's voice as he spoke of the massacre though both were pleased to know that he didn't hold their Captain's actions against him, at least not enough to throw him to the wolves.

"Lie," Porthos stated drawing the attention of the group to him, a small smirk growing on his face had both musketeers confused and intrigued. "Say you're willing to give him the proof but that you have to be the one to get it."

"Why would he go for that?"

Athos, who had cottoned on to Porthos's idea smirked, "Where is one of only places where you can go freely but Marcel would be stopped?"

It took a couple of moments for the answer to come to Aramis who was still being overpowered by his grief and guilt but when it did he answered his brothers' smirks with one of his own. "The garrison."

9. The Plan

****Evening My Lovelies!****

****I may or may not have done a small happy dance when I realized that we haven't even reached double digits chapter-wise but we're in triple digits review-wise XD****

****Notes On Reviews:****

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - That's the plan anyways... we'll have to see whether or not it'll happen. Enjoy the new chapter! x

watlocked: Thanks for the reviews - Your image of Marcel sounds similar to mine... minus the hat/feather... Though you're right, now I can't stop picturing it, maybe I'll give him one in a later chapter lol. D'Arts actions were definitely facepalm worthy, but we need to remember he hasn't been around the boys overly long so they haven't fully reigned in his reckless behavior yet. Glad you loved it. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - Glad you're liking it so far. Seeing as how it's me and our boys I can't guarantee that the plan will go completely as planned :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

romirola: Thanks for the review - You're welcome :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Why thank you :) *tips hat* the whumpage today is more emotional than physical so we'll probably be needing the angst-o-meter. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Deana: Thanks for the review - Aramis is going to get a heap more grief and guilt before all this is over :) and don't worry Aramis will be getting whumped fairly soonish (thinking chapter 13/14ish) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Katie (Guest): Thanks for the review - I'm glad you enjoyed it :) I can be quite the sadist when it comes to whumping D'Art so I'm afraid I can't guarantee that nothing too bad will happen. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Ruth (Guest): Thanks for the review - Athos will definitely be talking to our Gascon in a later chapter, he's going to have more important things to worry about between now and then though :) I'm glad you mentioned that Marcel is coming across more sympathetic as I have a plan for him that relies on that so I'm relieved that that's how he's coming across at the moment. The fact that there were 20 others who died will also be playing a part in later chapters. Backup is definitely going to be needed with what I have planned :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - Athos whump is coming I promise! We'll get a hint of what's coming tomorrow but it'll be starting properly the day after and I have a seriously bad piece of whumpage coming his way in a later chapter as well which I'm hoping you'll enjoy. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - Marcel's blinded by grief and needing to have someone to blame so he'll be easier for them to convince. D'Art's arm is going to be causing them trouble for a while now which is not good considering what I have planned :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the review - Hopefully today will answer a few questions. Enjoy the new chapter! x

MicheeO: Thanks for the review - You say that but now you have something to read every day so being caught up has its benefits as well... Plus I never leave you all waiting too long. With D'Art I'm pretty sure he'd find some way of getting seriously injured even if he was farming... Ooooh replying to this has given me another story idea... must write it down before I forget (I'll add it to my growing

list of story ideas) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - I was tempted to leave out the bone breaking and just have it as the joint dislocation but I have a plan for chapter13/14ish that'll be SOOO much more evil if D'Art's handicapped. Plus it let me write quite a cutey brotherly moment :D I didnt have it in me to send D'Art to Porthos. Not sure if thats due to the close bond both he and Athos share in all my other stories but either way it was cute. figured with what I have coming for our boys we needed to let them have a cute comforting moment. Aramis is going to be swimming in guilt for quite some time with this story and it may just end him up in trouble again fairly soon. I have some plans for Marcel that we'll be possibly seeing hints of soon but having him motivated by grief and not just and evil sadist is fairly key to that. I know! over 100 reviews! *happy dances* Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Nine: The Plan
**

"My friend," smirked Aramis, a small sliver of his usual cheerfulness creeping through as he looked at a very pleased with himself Porthos, "You are a genius."

"You're only just realizing this now?" Asked Porthos with an over-the-top frown on his face.

"You hide it so well."

Porthos opened his mouth to retort but was cut off by an exasperated sigh from Athos.

"Gentlemen in case you've forgotten we are currently being held against our will, a little focus please."

Both musketeers at least had the grace to look sheepish at the slight scolding but before either musketeer could respond a groan of pain caught their attention.

"D'Artagnan?" Athos called, leaning forward slightly to get a better view of the boy's, now scrunched up, face.

"Erghâ€¦ Why did I think charging at the guy would be a good idea?" groaned D'Artagnan as he pushed himself up off of Athos's lap, a sharp hiss of pain escaping his lips before he could stop it. Thankfully for the boy's pride if any of his new friends noticed it or the light blushing on his cheeks from waking up in Athos's lap, they were kind enough not to mention it.

"Because you wouldn't be our hot-headed pup if you didn't," chuckled Porthos, relief filling him at seeing the boy awake.

"Yeah," yawned the Gascon, clearly not completely with it just yet, as he hugged his broken arm close to his chest. "But then his friend would've come in, probably before I had a chance to free any of you as well knowing my luck."

The three men froze.

"Friend?"

D'Artagnan blinked owlshly, "Yeahâ€¦ well I think so." Tilting his head to one side he asked, "Did I not mention that?"

Athos sighed and barely resisted the urge to smack the Gascon on the head for not mentioning this fact sooner. "No D'Artagnan you did not."

"Oh,"

"Care to explain now?"

"Right," nodded the Gascon guiltily, "I don't know for definite as I've only ever seen Marcel but during our first 'conversation', before he brought you guys here he said 'we' instead of 'I' once."

"Makes sense," nodded Aramis, "They'd need someone to keep an eye on Viv and Marcel can't be two places at onceâ€¦ That also explains why you and Porthos were brought in hereâ€¦ Easier to keep an eye on us that way."

"Is Viv the girl from the letter?" D'Artagnan asked needing to keep the conversation going so he didn't focus too much on the agonizing pain that shot through his arm whenever he so much as twitched.

Aramis nodded but offered no other explanation and Athos felt the urge to smack someone rise up again.

Clearly seeing this Porthos took charge before Athos could say anything. "So who's this Viv girl anyways? â€¦ Old flame?"

To the men's great surprise Aramis looked positively disgusted by the idea, "God no!" he exclaimed, shaking his head. "She's practically my sister."

"And she knows Marsac? How did the two of you meet?" D'Artagnan asked curiously.

"Through Marsac," Aramis explained and though his breath caught on his dead friend's name the rest of the group refused to comment on it. "She's actually his sister, which explains why Marcel thought she'd have the information he was after."

"That's why she was heading to Paris," said D'Artagnan as he remembered what the old man had said when they had visited the woman's home.

Aramis nodded, grateful that had been the response and not the barrage of questions and anger he had been expecting. "They were extremely close before Savoyâ€¦ I â€¦ I have no idea if they kept in

touch afterwards, M-Marsac changed after that, but sheâ€ she had a right to know her last family member was dead."

A thought occurred to Aramis then and he hung his head guiltily.

"'Mis?" Porthos said softly, not liking how pale and distraught his friend had suddenly turned.

"She was leaving for Paris when they kidnapped her." Aramis whispered brokenly, his hands twitching in a way that told the men he would be running his hands either through his hair or down his face if he could.

"Yeahâ€" said Porthos hesitantly, not quite sure why Aramis was repeating what they already knew.

"That means it's my faultâ€ Everything that's happened to her, it's all my fault."

"No!" growled Athos, his voice startling Aramis out of his thoughts.

"No?" Aramis questioned, his voice full of disbelief, "How can you say that? She wouldn't have even have had reason to go to Paris if it wasn't for me!"

"Marsac made his choice," snarled Athos, successfully silencing his ranting brother. "You cannot hold yourself accountable for what his actions brought."

"But â€" "

"Listen to the man 'Mis," scolded Porthos lightly as he watched the two bicker whilst keeping an eye on a slightly swaying D'Artagnan. The boy was trying to present himself as fine but even a blind man could tell he was anything but.

Aramis didn't look like he believed what Athos and Porthos were saying but he knew better than to keep arguing with them so he swallowed his next protest.

"Look," sighed Porthos, exhaustion creeping up on him, "We 'ave a plan and he's not coming back for a bit so why don't we get some sleep. We're going to need it if we're getting out of here soon."

None of them really liked the idea of falling asleep, especially when they did not know what their captor was truly capable of, or how many of them there really were. After all the man had expressed a desire not to use violence, especially against D'Artagnan and yet that was exactly what he had done. It was only the thought of having enough energy to fight back that eventually got them to settle down for a nap.

* * *

><p>When Marcel returned as promised several hours later Athos was the only one awake. The musketeer was an extremely light sleeper, even more so when his brother's were in dangerous situations, so he

had lightly napped for the first hour before finding himself awake and keeping watch for the remainder of the time.<p>

He had tried to move closer to the young Gascon as the boy slept in an effort to comfort him as he whimpered quietly in his sleep every now and then but his restraints limited his movement. So instead he had taken to whispering soothing words whenever the pained whimpers got particularly bad, internally glad his brothers were asleep so he would not be called out for doing so.

"I do hope you haven't spent the entire time asleep," comment Marcel as he took in the stirring musketeers. "I would hate to have him continue to deny me the answers I seek."

Athos said nothing and only glared in response, only stopping when he became aware of the others now being awake.

As Marcel turned and moved towards Aramis, Athos gestured for D'Artagnan, who remained unshackled, to move closer to him. The swordsman did not like the injured boy being without some form of protection, either from Marcel or from his own rashness. Thankfully D'Artagnan willingly complied with the silent order and slowly shuffled closer to his mentor who glanced worriedly at the boy when he saw how pale and in pain the boy seemed to be. He could only hope that their plan worked and they could get D'Artagnan out of here. The boy needed proper treatment and medication if he was to maintain use of that arm.

"So have you decided to remain silent and watch your brothers suffer or are you finally going to be smart and tell me what I want to know?" Marcel sneered, his hand resting forebodingly on his sword hilt.

Athos had to give credit to Aramis for the man's acting skills as he managed to look convincingly torn as he allowed his eyes to flicker between his brothers. Sighing Aramis nodded slowly.

"Aramis," snapped Athos with little heat, keeping up the act.

"Hush musketeer," scolded Marcel, looking inordinately pleased with himself, "Let the man talk if he wishes to."

From his spot on the floor Porthos sent his brothers a subtle, yet smug, grin. The man had brought Aramis's act, now they only had to see if he would buy the rest of it as well.

"M-Marsac came to me because as the only other survivor of Savoy he knew I would listen to him regarding the truth of it." Aramis said quietly, allowing the pain Savoy memories brought him to seep into his tone to add to his story's believability.

"And?"

"Before he died he begged me to hide the proof he had found, only using it when the moment was right. He said there were too many people who would benefit from it never seeing the light of day so it must remain out of their hands and only be used at the right moment to ensure they faced justice for their crimes."

All of the men could see the tenseness in Marcel's frame, clearly the

man was so obsessed with finding the truth and having someone to blame that he would believe whatever Aramis told him regarding it.

"I knew it," whispered Marcel as his hand came up to rub his chin, "I knew he wouldn't have risked returning to Paris unless he was sure." Turning back to Aramis he added, "Well? Where did you hide it?"

"The safest place I know," admitted Aramis, ensuring he still came across somewhat hesitant. Marcel was buying into their ruse for now, they couldn't risk tipping him off before too the end.

"'Mis!" exclaimed Porthos, acting the dismayed friend while inside he was applauding his friend's acting.

Ignoring the musketeer's outburst Aramis finished his answer, "The musketeer garrison."

Marcel blinked and for a moment the men thought he had finally seen through their hastily put together plan. "The garrison?" he questioned

Aramis, swallowing his nerves, shrugged as best as he was able given his chains. "In one of the rooms only someone well known to the regiment would be able to get access to. The others in the regiment wouldn't go snooping in there and anyone seeking the documents would be denied access due to them not being a musketeer."

"Why would he not use it himself?" questioned Marcel as he stared hard at the chained musketeer. "He could have brought the truth to light and seen justice done with his own eyes."

"He needed my help getting the last piece of the puzzle but wasâ€¦" swallowing down the lump in his throat Aramis averted his eyes skyward in hopes of stilling the brewing tears as he uttered the last part of his story, "â€¦ was killed before he could make his findings public."

Marcel nodded, seemingly believing the musketeer's story, much to the relief of the other men in the room. Athos was the first among them to notice the look that entered Marcel's eyes, the musketeer's instantly tensing frame alerting the Gascon that something was potentially amiss.

"If he asked for your help then both you and your so called brothers know the answers I seek." Glared Marcel as he cracked his knuckles.

"They don't," Aramis answered, barely keeping the growing panic out of his voice. "Marsac didn't trust that they wouldn't just arrest him for actions after the massacre and I didn't wish for them to be involved with anything potentially dangerous so we investigated in secret."

"But you know?"

Aramis shook his head, sending up a silent prayer that his acting skill could carry him through this, "Marsac knew I couldn't be spotted when he left to collect the piece of information we were missing. The musketeers are well known in the city and my presence

there would have only garnered questions and raised suspicions. He was coming to me when he died."

* * *

><p>"Well," mused Marcel after a few tense silent moments, "Looks like you get to go home after all Spaniard."<p>

This time it was Aramis who blinked, though inside he was cheering and smirking, "Why do I get the feeling it's more than because I told you what I know?"

Marcel nodded, "You return to the garrison and bring me the proof and then I'll release the rest of your merry band of misfits."

Aramis narrowed his eyes at the man, "Why not release them as well? You still have Viv."

Marcel laughed, "You do not think I haven't heard of the mighty 'inseparables'? No I will not risk it. You will leave and return on your own."

This was slightly different then they had anticipated and Aramis allowed his gaze to flicker over to Athos for guidance, only the man was focused of the grimacing form of D'Artagnan by his side, the boy was clearly suffering greatly from the pain in his arm though he tried to hide it.

"D'Artagnan comes with me." Aramis stated confidently drawing the attention of everyone in the room and before Marcel could say anything in return Aramis continued. "You've already said how you didn't want to involve him as he is no musketeer," the marksman bit back a scowl at that, in their eyes D'Artagnan was already one of them in everything but title so to dismiss him, even for his own good, didn't sit right with him. "He is no threat to you given his current condition but without treatment it he will suffer. He comes with me so I can treat his arm and I'll bring back your proof to get the rest of my companions free."

Marcel was silent as he pondered the musketeer's demand, allowing himself a second to take in the Gascon's condition. True to the Spaniard's assessment he could hardly see the boy being much of a threat to him given his current state.

"Very well," nodded Marcel, not missing the collective relieved sigh from the chained men. "I will allow you the rest of the night to rest and collect the pair of you at first light."

Aramis nodded his agreement and opened his mouth to speak but Marcel interrupted with a threat before he could begin.

"But be aware I will not tolerate betrayal and will be taking measures to ensure you do not dally to long."

"What's that supposed to mean?" growled Porthos, not taking kindly to his brothers being threatened.

Marcel smirked dangerously, "You'll see in the morning. Rest well musketeers."

10. Ominous Words

****Evening My Lovelies ****

****Lots happening today, we've got snappy D'art, guilty Aramis, protective Athos and hints of tomorrows whumpage. Lots to keep you all entertained. ****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - Glad you liked it. Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Oh Marcel definitely has something in store for our boys come morning :) Good to know the meters are ready :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - You're right not to trust Marcel, bad things are on the way. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the reviews - It's me, when was D'Art ever going to catch a break when I'm involved lol Athos is going to be restraining his inner gibbs today as well. You'll be finding out some of what Marcel has planned today. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Yeah pretty much :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

romirola: Thanks for the review - Enjoy the new chapter! x

Katie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Unfortunately theres a lot of pain coming to all of our boys very very soon, none of them are going to get out of this unscathed. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the review - Yeah I dont think they've really thought that far ahead in terms of creating false proof, hopefully Treville can help them when they eventually get back. You're idea makes a lot more sense and now me and Aramis are kicking ourselves ... Athos and Porthos are definitely in for some pain very soon but then so are D'Art and Aramis. We get some more protective moments today as well so hopefully you'll like them too. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - :D the only thing better than musketeers in peril are the snuggly comfort moments that will eventually follow :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jmp (Guest): Thanks for the review - Glad to have you back :) We'll be learning a bit of what Marcel has planned today but wont actually see it in action until tomorrow. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Maryg (Guest): Thanks for the review - Part of me feels like I should do just that, simply to throw you all through a loop lol But nah, my evil mind wont be happy with that so whumpage, danger, drama it is :D And worry not D'Art's not done whumpage wise, got plenty in store for all of them. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Guest: Thanks for the review - I'm SO happy you're loving the story

(love getting reviews that say that :D) If wishing D'Art got whumped makes you a horrible person I can't even imagine what it makes me to write it lol :D Worry not, I can't not write lots of whumpage for our pup, he's got a couple of chapters before anything else happens but he'll have plenty more whumpage coming his way. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - There may be one or two stumbling blocks coming their way. Viv will eventually show up in the story properly rather than just mentioned. We'll be learning of Marcel's measures today and I can guarantee the rescue aint going to go smoothly :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

MicheeO: Thanks for the review - A little wait wont kill you :) Glad you're liking the story so far. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - Haha I know, whenever the 'Gentlemen' or 'Children' comes out you know someone's about to get told off :D We get a bit more banter today so hopefully that'll go down well. We had cutey D'Art yesterday... today we get snappy D'Art, pain is not helping his mood unfortunately. Viv is going to be bringing Aramis a HUGE amount of guilt in a later chapter but we have a bit till we get there. Athos has his cute moments :) He wants to be all protective big brother he just can't acknowledge it yet. Hopefully you'll like... hate? what I have planned for our boys. Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Ten: Ominous Words

"Well," breathed Aramis, "That was scarily ominous."

"I don't like this plan," grunted Porthos as he shuffled awkwardly on the floor.

"It was your plan!" remarked Aramis, raising an eyebrow at his friend.

"Don't mean I 'ave to like it."

*** * ***

><p>Athos and D'Artagnan sat in silence as they watched the two grown men bicker like children while trying to decide whether the hassle they would get for interrupting them was worth doing so.<p>

_Do we? _Asked D'Artagnan silently as he quirked his head to one side to gesture to the bickering pair.

Athos fought the urge to sigh at the two grown men's antics but eventually settled for shaking his head at D'Artagnan who waited patiently for an answer. His head was already beginning to pound, no

sense adding to it by attempting to get those two to act their age.

"How's the pain?" Athos asked quietly so as to not draw the attention of the other two men.

D'Artagnan opened his mouth to say he was fine but quickly noticed the stern look Athos was giving him, that was almost daring him to try to brush it off, and knew better than to risk his mentor's ire by lying now.

"Been better," he grunted quietly. "Least the focus is off of my ribs now," he added as a slightly morbidly cheery afterthought.

Athos quirked an eyebrow and tilted his head down to look at the boy beside him, "ribs?"

D'Artagnan was quick to curse under his breath for admitting that fact but knew he couldn't retract it now. "Yeah," he sighed, wincing slightly at the pain. "Marcel is stronger than he looks, he got in a couple of good hits when he was capturing me."

"And you didn't think this was important for us to know?" Athos scolded, working hard to keep his voice quiet, "Haven't we told you that hiding injuries puts everyone at risk."

Bristling at being scolded like a misbehaving child D'Artagnan glared hard at his mentor, "I didn't lie, Porthos knows."

"I definitely can, you're just jel â€" "

"PORTHOS!" bellowed Athos, completely cutting off the larger man's come back to the latest bit of banter the two men had been exchanging while D'Artagnan and Athos talked.

Saying nothing in response to his friend's surprising anger Porthos tilted his head to one side and raised a questioning eyebrow.

"Why weren't we told about D'Artagnan's broken ribs?" demanded the swordsman, his anger at the situation and damage done to his protégé at new heights.

"What!?" exclaimed Aramis as the medic twisted in his chains to try and get a better look at the young Gascon who was now trying his best to sink into the floor.

"When was I supposed to do that?" snapped Porthos, "'sides, not like we can do anything for them anyway."

"You let him charge at Marcel with them!" Athos retorted, his words snapping D'Artagnan back to attention.

"He didn't **let **me do anything and you know it! I'm in pain but otherwise okay so can we drop this and get some sleep because I don't know about Aramis but I really don't fancy walking back to Paris half asleep."

The three men couldn't do anything but blink at the boy's outburst and by the time the surprise had worn off the Gascon had shuffled away from Athos and was, despite the pain, lying on his side with his

back facing them.

* * *

><p>Porthos was the first to break out of his stupor and barked out a short laugh, "Pup's got some bark to him huh?"<p>

Athos allowed his lips to quirk upwards at his brother's words, feeling some of his earlier anger dissipate, though his eyes continually flickered to D'Artagnan's form.

Aramis was silent as he allowed the news that his actions had caused the boy more pain than he had thought to sink in. Once it had and he had forced himself to push down the growing guilt he raised his head and took in the lying form of the Gascon, wincing at the pain that position must be causing him.

"You're doing yourself more harm then good lying like that D'Art," he offered hesitantly, unsure if the boy would even acknowledge it after his outburst but to his relief a few moments later he watched as D'Artagnan rolled onto his back, though he kept his head facing away from them.

"You stop off as soon as possible to tend to those," ordered Athos as he shuffled into a slightly more comfortable sleeping position.

"No Athos I'm going to make him walk all the way back to Paris before I do anything about it," snapped Aramis sarcastically before sighing resignedly, "Those injuries are practically my doing, I'll treat them as soon as I can."

Despite the sarcastic tone of his voice Athos was able to hear the hurt lying underneath and winced for having put it there. "Apologies my friend," he offered quietly, knowing that Aramis didn't have the heart to let someone suffer for any longer then absolutely necessary.

"Great we're all friends again," grumbled Porthos as he watch Aramis nod and smile softly at Athos. "Now can you all shut up so we can get some sleep?"

"Somebody's cranky," teased Aramis, winking cheekily at Athos.

"We're gonna be stuck here with Mr. Obsessive while you're off to Paris with no weapons and D'Artagnan, who has only one usable arm, as backup. I think I'm allowed to be cranky."

That sombered Aramis right up and he sent his friend an apologetic look, "Apologies my friend," he offered, mimicking Athos's own words to him moments earlier.

Porthos merely grunted in reply before letting his head rest against his chest as he closed his eyes.

"I'll watch out for him," reassured Athos quietly as he saw the despondent look in Aramis's eyes.

"So long as he returns the favor, I've found that I'm practicing my skills on both of you more than I care for, I have no desire to get

more practice in," ordered Aramis.

"I'm sure he will," smiled Athos, knowing this whole situation was playing havoc with the medic's already frayed nerves. "Get some sleep," he ordered gently, "You have a long day tomorrow."

* * *

><p>"A-Athosâ€|" whispered Aramis several minutes later once he was sure the only ones still awake were himself and the swordsman.<p>

"Aramis?" Athos queried, lifting his head from where he had been watching over the sleeping men to stare questioningly at his friend, the vulnerability in his brother's voice nearly breaking the stoic man's heart.

"Iâ€| I just need toâ€| In case this doesn't workâ€|"

Athos's eyes widened momentarily before his expression turned firm. "None of that Aramis."

"No I need toâ€|"

"No you don't," growled Athos, twisting on the spot to better face his guilt-ridden friend. "You want to apologize? Fine, but do it when we're all out of here."

Aramis sighed and nodded weakly. Seeing this Athos allowed his expression to soften as he turned back to how he was originally sitting.

"I can't speak for the others," said the swordsman softly a few moments later, his words instantly gaining the medic's attention. "But you have nothing to apologize to me for. I am the last person who could judge actions motivated by griefâ€| Just look how I almost lost us Porthos a month ago."

Aramis opened his mouth to respond but Athos continued.

"Make your apologies if you must but know I am still honored to call you brother."

Aramis felt tears stream down his face at Athos's words and he could do little more than smile weakly at the man as Athos, clearly uncomfortable with being so emotional, settled down to sleep without another word.

* * *

><p>The four men were woken up the following morning by the sound of a heavy chair being dragged into the room.<p>

"Oh good, you're awake," grinned Marcel as he finished setting the chair in the middle of the room.

"'ard to sleep with all the racket," grumbled Porthos under his breath as he sat himself up a bit and stretched to work out the sore muscles he had gained from sleeping in such a position.

"What's with the chair?" D'Artagnan asked, unable to contain the curiosity at seeing it.

"Part of the plan to ensure your friend doesn't tally for more than he needs to," explained Marcel as took a step towards Aramis who watched the man with calculating eyes.

"Once you leave, one of your friends here will be placed in the chair," Marcel explained as he began to unlock Aramis's chains. "As I'm sure you can see those aren't ordinary cuffs on the arms and legs."

At this the four men stared at the chair, each of their eyes widening slightly in horror as they noticed each of the cuffs had a vice-like mechanism on them that would allow for them to be tightened.

With a smirk that didn't quite reach his eyes Marcel continued his explanation. "For every few hours that you do not return with the proof I will tighten one of them a different amount so unless you wish one of your friends to have four broken limbs you best ensure you are quick."

Aramis swallowed and forced himself to tear his gaze away from the barbaric chair one of his brother's would soon be forced to endure.

"You can't do this!" exclaimed the marksman, fury and fear fighting for dominance in his eyes.

"Oh I very much can," stated Marcel, the picture of calm as he observed the medic.

"They're not involved in this! Hurt me if you must but leave them alone!"

"They became involved when they came for you," said Marcel his voice cold and hard. "If you wish to save them from this fate you best travel quickly."

"You're aware we have no idea where we currently are right?" snapped D'Artagnan as he pushed himself to his feet, subconsciously moving closer to stand in front of Athos as he spoke.

"Semantics my boy," waved Marcel as he finished unchaining Aramis and had the medic steadied. "Now shall we go? You have quite the journey after all."

"If we don't know where we are how are we to get both back to Paris and here?" snarled D'Artagnan, his unbroken hand clenching into a tight fist.

"I'll give you a map if you stop with the inane questions," growled Marcel as he rounded on the Gascon, who true to expectations stood tall and refused to be intimidated.

Aramis watched the fury grow on D'Artagnan's face and knew it was only a matter of time before the boy abandoned the plan and attacked the man, something that would not help them if the man did indeed have more than one companion.

"Then give it to us so we can leave, I do not wish for my brothers or Viv to be in your clutches for a second longer than they need to be," commanded Aramis, almost sagging in relief when he saw D'Artagnan take a step back and calm down slightly.

"But of course, follow me gentlemen," Marcel stated as he went to leave the room.

"Oh," Marcel said spinning on his heels and looked Aramis straight in his eyes. "Before I forget, should anything happen to me the lovely lady Vivienne will meet a very painful and drawn out death." Aramis paled further, "Shall we move?"

11. Stubbornness and Pain

****Evening My Lovelies****

****Sorry this is slightly later than usual I got wrapped up in writing a later chapter and lost track of time. ****

****Also if there's anything you would like to see happen to either our boys or our baddie let me know and I'll see what I can do, I always welcome ideas and suggestions :D****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - Hope it was worth the wait :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

watlocked: Thanks for the reviews - It's fine, I'm just glad you take the time to read it :D D'Art and his impulsiveness are back again today, much to Aramis's worry. I'm desperately trying to come up with a situation that'll allow me to give Marcel a feathered hat lol :D It's all I can picture now whenever I write him. If you liked that bit of banter you're going to love what I've included in tomorrow's chapter, there's a slightly bizarre bit of banter for our boys then. I don't know what inspired the chair thing to be quite honest... and part of me feels I should be worried that my mind can just come up with that :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Bwhahaha! I would love it if it was XD You'll have to read to see who's going to end up in the chair. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - When is it ever that easy :) In Athos's defense the boy hasn't been with them long so he hasn't really learnt yet that the boy just attracts trouble XD Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Glad you liked the Athos/Aramis moment, considering what's coming for the boys I felt they needed a brotherly moment. The hate-o-meters going to be getting quite a bit of use in the next several chapters :D Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - I'm afraid for what whumpage is in this chapter it might not be worth the wait :(but worry not it's going to last several chapters and get worse for him as it progresses :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - I did say Aramis is going to be swimming in guilt :) He's going to need some serious brotherly love when all this is over. Which is good as it means snuggly moments XD Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - Oooh a long truncated review :) always love them :) I LOVE protective Athos moments but they're a bit hard to write when his relationship with D'Art is only in its early stages, hopefully what I've done works though :) The whole situation is beginning to affect them all making them all quite snappy and grouchy (as evidence today by Porthos) The talk between Athos and Aramis almost didnt happen. I added it just before I published the chapter yesterday, mainly as the word count was a bit low and I felt like Aramis would try to say something given what was about to happen. I'm SO glad I decided to include it, the response has been very good :) I really want to bring Viv in properly but she's having to stay out of things for the moment (I have plans for her later) Hmmm if you thought D'Art was being dangerous yesterday just wait to see what he's doing today :D I'm really happy you're enjoying the story so far. Hopefully this chapter is just a good a read :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the review - I agree, no matter how much Aramis may want to simply race back to Paris to get help for the others he's not going to ignore D'Art's injuries, especially as he blames himself for them. Glad you liked Athos/Aramis's moment, it was a spur of the minute thing to include but I'm really glad I put it in as its gone over really well. They'll be revisiting that talk later once they eventually get out of harms way. Marcel knows a bit about the massacre but not much, hence his desire to find out what really happened. Their plan was shaky at best so it could fall to bits at any minute... not good for our remaining boys. Enjoy the new chapter! x

MicheeO: Thanks for the review - You've read all my other stories and you're only just getting concerned now? I think it would be less worrying if the ideas came from research but nooooo it's all the work of my evil mind :D It's okay if you worry about me I worry too lol Enjoy the new chapter! x

****Hugs, High Fives & Fist-Bumps to everyone who follows/favourites/reviews/reads this! Love you all!****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Eleven: Stubbornness and Pain

"You will take this road back to Paris," instructed Marcel as he traced a route on the map

Aramis frowned as he observed the route, ensuring that he was standing in front of D'Artagnan as much as possible at all times. "That's a longer route," growled the medic, his voice full of barely contained rage. "I thought I told you I am not leaving them here for

anytime longer than absolutely necessary."

"Then you should walk quickly," snarled Marcel, moving around the table to stand almost nose to nose with Aramis

"We're talking this route," snapped Aramis as he jammed his finger down on the map. "We left our horses near there, it will allow us to get to Paris and back quicker."

Anger growing at the medic's attitude Marcel whipped out his pistol, priming the firing mechanism and pointed it at D'Artagnan before either man had fully registered what was going on. "Do not disobey me!"

Both men froze at the sight of the firearm aimed at the young man, though to each of their surprise, D'Artagnan actually recovered first, moving as quick as he could to stand in front of Aramis, Marcel's pistol following him as he moved.

"Go ahead," he dared, hoping that all his new friend's advice about trusting his instincts weren't about to fail him now.

"D'Art!" hissed Aramis in terrified panic, his hands gripping the back of the boy's jacket in a desperate effort to move him, only the young Gascon remained defiant

"You got a death wish boy?" sneered Marcel as he glared at the defiant young man before him.

"Why do you want us to go that route?" D'Artagnan snapped before either man could add anything further. "You claimed to not want to resort to violence and that you only wanted justice for your family yet you fight us when we're willing to go the quicker route. Why?"

Aramis stared at the back of D'Artagnan's head, his eyes bright with pride. _Oh if only Athos could have seen you just now mon jeune ami _mused the marksman, _It might have even had been enough to get you out of trouble after you stepped in front of this guy's gun._

It was a tense couple of moments as they waited to see how Marcel would react but eventually, to their great relief, he holstered the pistol. "You've got some guts kid," he remarked lightly as he stared at the Gascon, "Take care that attitude of yours doesn't get you into trouble some day." He added with a slightly threatening tone to his voice that had D'Artagnan's proverbial hackles rising again.

Turning his head slightly so he look at Aramis, Marcel added, "Take that route if you wish, just bring me the proof."

Aramis narrowed his eyes at their captor, _too easy _he decided, _Marcel was determined enough to get us to take that path that he to threaten to shoot us and now because of a glare and a bark from our little pup he relents? What is he planning?_

Not willing to waste any more time, especially as every minute they delayed was another minute their friends were in Marcel's hands, Aramis gripped D'Artagnan's good arm and began pulling them out of the room.

* * *

><p>"I really don't like this Aramis," D'Artagnan whispered when they were far enough from the compound to ensure that Marcel hadn't followed them. "Something's up."<p>

"Let's just get to the horses," muttered Aramis as he focused on using his keen eyesight to search for any pursuers. "The sooner we get there the sooner I can have a look at that arm and those ribs."

"What? No!" exclaimed D'Artagnan, nearly tripping over his own feet in his rush to turn to face his friend who was now looking at him with a surprised expression. "You can't!"

"That arm needs tending to and do you really want to be galloping across the countryside with unbound ribs?" chided Aramis, his expression softening slightly when he saw the worry and pain etched plainly on the young man's face.

"But..."

"Besides," the marksman said lightly as if D'Artagnan hadn't spoken, "I swore to Athos I would look at them at the first possible opportunity. You're not going to make me a liar are you?" It was a bit of a low blow and Aramis knew it, but he needed to check the boy over and it would go a lot quicker without him fighting him the entire way.

D'Artagnan mumbled something unintelligible, though the tone told Aramis he was probably cursing. Looking over at the boy the medic allowed his lips to quirk upwards into a soft smile as he noticed how suitably chastised he looked and Aramis knew he had won that debate.

* * *

><p>Back in their cell both Athos and Porthos sat chained against opposite walls, both men glaring at the chair that sat innocently in the middle of the room, despite the promise of great pain it promise.<p>

"So do you reckon he knows who 'es putting in there or do we get to volunteer for the honor?" grumbled Porthos, his eyes never leaving the chair.

"Aramis will be quick," Athos said, his voice calm and collected despite having deflected answering the musketeer's question.

Porthos grunted in acknowledgement but said nothing else, too lost in his worry about his friends to conjure up a suitable conversation.

Silence reigned for several minutes before the larger musketeer was pulled from his worrying by the soft call of his name from the man across the room. Staring at his brother questioningly Porthos raised a single eyebrow at the man in a silent gesture for him to continue.

"If he does make us choose," Athos said, keeping his voice low enough

that only Porthos could hear it. Though the swordsman didn't miss the subtle tensing of his brother's frame. "Let me do it."

Porthos's eyes widened in horror, "You can't seriously be asking me that 'Thos!"

"It's our best option," stated the musketeer with a determination in his voice that spoke to how he would not be swayed in this matter.

"How is letting you be tortured our best option?" Snarled Porthos, his worry and anger making him glare at his friend.

"Because you're better at hand to hand combat," remarked Athos calmly, his words causing Porthos to still and for the anger boiling inside of him to simmer down ever so slightly.

Seeing his friend was either willing to hear him out or was too stunned to reply Athos continued, ensuring all the while that his voice was kept low and inaudible to potential eavesdroppers. "If there is even the slimmest opportunity to escape we must take it and without weapons we'll be relying on our fists should any escape be noticed," Porthos nodded at this, feeling his body relax slightly as they took in the logic behind the man's words.

"And I'm better at hand to hand," murmured Porthos; unintentionally mimicking the words Athos had said not a few minutes earlier.

Athos nodded, "So if he lets us choose... Let me do it."

* * *

><p>It was just over an hour later when Marcel returned to their cell, the smug smile he wore on his face was enough to put both musketeers on edge.<p>

"Well gentlemen," remarked Marcel as he moved into the center of the room. "I know how much musketeers value brotherhood and honor. So I will allow you, should you be so inclined, to save your friend by volunteering yourself - "

"I'll do it," declared Athos before Marcel had even finished speaking.

"'Thos!" Porthos exclaimed, knowing it was part of the plan but being unable to stay silent at the fact that one of his dearest friends was about to undergo a lot of pain.

"Excellent," exclaimed Marcel but there was something in the way he said it that counteracted the smug look on his face. If Athos was being honest with himself he would have thought that their captor was either not happy with him volunteering or with the situation as a whole... which was an interesting notion for the swordsman to consider. _If D'Artagnan was right and there is more than one person involved in this, maybe Marcel is just the mouthpiece for the other player, _mused Athos. Marcel had seemed genuine when he had explained his reasons for wanting to know about Savoy but everything else the man did was a contradiction. One minute he's expressing a desire not to hurt anyone and the next he's savagely breaking D'Artagnan's arm. Something more was going on here then they were aware of and Athos

couldn't help but be afraid for what that meant for his brother and
protégé as they made their way back to Paris.

Before either musketeer could say or do anything Marcel moved to
stand in front of Athos, a water skin held out in front of the man.
"Drink," Marcel ordered shaking the canteen lightly as he
spoke.

Athos's eyes narrowed but did as he was instructed when he saw a
flash of irritation enter Marcel's steely gaze. He definitely didn't
trust what the man was giving him but he couldn't risk him changing
his mind and forcing whatever the concoction was on Porthos.

Within seconds of drinking the water Athos could feel himself
becoming increasingly dizzy, his hand, that was now shaking lightly,
moved to his face in an effort to combat the wave of lightheadedness
now assaulting him.

"What the hell did you give him?!" roared Porthos as he was forced to
watch with growing worry as the drugs in the water affected his
friend.

Without turning back to look at the furious musketeer Marcel kept his
focus on the now panting man before him. "It's just something to
ensure he doesn't fight back when I move him. It'll wear off soon
enough."

Athos's eyes attempted to narrow again as he glared at the man, a
slurred and inaudible curse passed his lips as he sagged against the
chains holding him, now feeling too weak to do anything but
breathe.

Seeing this Marcel moved to unlock the cuffs keeping the musketeer
chained and once the man was freed he threw one of his arms over his
shoulder and carried the man to the chair, setting him down with a
gentleness that surprised the still fuming Porthos.

"So what happens now?" growled Porthos, his eyes never leaving
Athos's face.

"Now," sighed Marcel as he grabbed one of the cuffs, "you pray your
friends move fast." With that he sharply tightened the mechanism on
the cuff, Athos's pained screams piercing the air.

12. Two Spoons

****Evening My Lovelies!****

****Sorry its late again, I got distracted writing.****

****Now this chapter is a little bit of an odd one, we're going from
serious to weird to serious again. I think my mind has the whumpage
moments planned out and then forgets the moments in between which is
the only reasoning I can think of for the conversation that happens
between two of our boys in this chapter. I have no idea where it came
from but it kinda works so hopefully you'll like it :)****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Tidia: Thanks for the review - Aramis is going to try to hurry... emphasis on try :) Hmm if you're hating Marcel now you're probably really going to hate him in coming chapters. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Deana: Thanks for the review - Sorry to keep you waiting :) You've got a short wait (like a day :D) but Aramis is due some whumpage worry not :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Katie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Haha that seems to be the general consensus where Marcel's concerned. D'Art and Aramis are going to try but it wouldn't be me if something didn't go wrong :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Hmmm that's an interesting idea but no Viv is not the mastermind behind all this, though now part of me is wishing I had made her that as that's quite a good idea ... oh well. I don't really want to say much about Marcel as I'll probably give it all away and then you'll all hate me so you'll just have to wait and find out. Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Yep :) D'Art gives as good as he gets protectiveness wise ... Plus it helps that he has very little sense of self preservation it seems lol Enjoy the new chapter! x

watlocked: Thanks for the review - Marcel has his reasons and we'll be learning a bit more about the situation tomorrow. Glad you think so :) You've always given good suggestions in the past so if you think of anything don't hesitate to say :) I'm tempted to have Aramis let it slip to Athos once they're all in the clear that D'Art stepped in front of a gun, just to write his reaction lol. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the reviews - Gotta love protective boys :D How strange? I'm only uploading one chapter a day so I'm not quite sure what's going on there... Maybe the sites playing up again or something. D'Art's definitely causing our boys no shortage of headaches, especially Aramis but then he wouldn't be our pup if he didn't :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

MoonlightTaylor (Guest): Thanks for the review - We get to see Porthos's guilt over the whole situation tomorrow, I really like how it turned out so I'm hoping you'll all enjoy it as well. Trouble, that's what's waiting for our boys on the road :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - Would he be the Athos we know and love if he didn't? I'll admit that the confusion Marcel is causing people is a lot of fun for me :D More than a little bit of pain might be coming our boy's way, but then that just means more comfort/brotherly moments which are always fun to write :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jmp (Guest): Thanks for the review - Haha that response means I'm doing my job with my baddie :D There's no way D'Art would let Aramis leave him behind so that's out of the question, despite being the logical option. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - You may be on to something my

friend, best wait till tomorrow to find out :D Worry not there's lots more whumpage coming Athos's way in the next few chapters. Enjoy the new chapter! x

MicheeO: Thanks for the review - Bwahahaha! I would love to know just how Porthos would be able to persuade Marcel to do that XD I'm afraid pretty much none of those questions will be answered today... I'm evil I know but thats why you love me :D Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - I do think Athos might have to learn of D'Arts actions at some point, purely as I'm curious as to how he'd react... we'll see. Aramis is not above emotional blackmail if it gets the boy to listen to him thats for sure. Having Athos volunteer has led to some really nice (not sure thats quite the right word but oh well) moments between him and Porthos. I'll admit I'm really curious as to what you'll think of their bantering session today. As I've warned it's pretty weird but I couldn't not keep it in once I read it through XD Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Twelve: Two Spoons
*

The midday sun was just beginning to bear down on the two men when the abandoned barn they had left their horses at finally came into view.

"Thank God," sighed Aramis under his breath. The musketeer had been trying very hard not to think about what their friends had suffered because of the time it took them to simply reach their mounts.

Unfortunately for the two men the ground, which was uneven to begin with, had become saturated with mud during the rain the night before making travelling more difficult. Added to that were D'Artagnan's injuries, which despite his attempts to brush off, had been causing the young man no end of pain and the fact that Aramis wasn't in prime condition either. The musketeer was now over a week into a routine of little sleep and a diet that mostly consisted of whatever alcohol he could get his hands on at the time, which meant that the musketeer was beginning to suffer from bouts of light-headedness and exhaustion that made traversing the slippery ground difficult.

"Come," gestured the medic, pushing aside all thoughts of what could be happening to his friends right about now, "lets get those injuries seen to so we can head home."

"Aramis," sighed D'Artagnan, it very much almost coming out as a whine.

The medic silenced the boy with one sharp look, "We've been through this D'Artagnan," snapped the musketeer, "You're in no condition to

travel so either you let me look at you or you stay here."

D'Artagnan almost reeled back, surprised by the sharpness of Aramis's words. The Gascon knew the medic was stressed, exhausted, worried and no doubt his constant dismissal of his injuries was grating on his last nerve but he hadn't expected the outburst he'd received.

Aramis noticed this and despite feeling guilty for having hurt the boy he refused to soften his stance on the matter. Only choosing to allow some of his usual warmth back into his eyes when a shamefaced D'Artagnan nodded, hung his head and began walking to their horses.

"Right," Aramis said gently as he finished sorting out his supplies, he had already ordered D'Artagnan to remove his shirt so he could bind his ribs and the medic found his whole demeanor softening when D'Artagnan complied without question or complaint. "I'm going to do your ribs first so just try to breathe normally while I do this."

D'Artagnan nodded and closed his eyes against the uncomfortable pain that was getting his ribs bound, Aramis had offered to make some pain reliever but in the Gascon's eyes they were already losing time because of him and he was not going to make them lose any more just so he could be comfortable.

"You good D'Art?" Aramis asked softly as he finished tying off the bandage, his keen eyes watched the boy for any sign that the pain was too much. It hurt him that he was as relieved as he was that the Gascon had refused the pain medication. He knew that the boy would be in a lot of pain, particularly when they started riding but he couldn't get the thought of Athos or Porthos being tortured because of the time it would take to stop and make the draught. That being said however he was in no way going to let the boy push himself too far so he watched, observed and thanked the Lord for the boy's stubbornness and resilience.

Shuffling slightly as he tried to get used to the constricting bandage on his chest D'Artagnan nodded, a small reassuring smile on his face that quickly turned into a grimace when the medic took a gentle hold of his broken arm and began to examine it.

"Sorry," soothed Aramis as D'Artagnan hissed in pain at his ministrations, "I need to know how badly it's broken before I can set and wrap it."

"It's fine," grunted the Gascon, his eyes staring stubbornly at the ceiling as he fought to contain the tears of pain that threatened to escape thanks to the inferno of pain Aramis's examination was causing.

"You're in luck my friend," grinned Aramis as he released D'Artagnan's arm, the boy bringing it to his chest protectively as soon as he did so, "The bone was a clean break and despite the journey to get here the bone hasn't significantly shifted at all so I'll splint and wrap it then we can be on our way."

Not trusting himself to speak as Aramis began his work D'Artagnan grunted in reply, biting the inside of his cheek hard enough to draw

blood as his arm was tended to.

* * *

><p>"'Thos?" whispered Porthos, his voice heavy with worry as he waited for some sign of awareness from his friend. It had been at least four hours since Aramis and D'Artagnan had left and since then Marcel had come in twice to tighten the cuffs keeping Athos trapped in the chair and each time the larger musketeer was powerless to do anything but sit there and watch as his friend and brother tried not to vocalize any signs of pain despite the evidence being clear as day on his face.<p>

"Come on 'Thos, talk to me," he begged, needing to see that his brother was okay, that he had done the right thing in ignoring all his instincts and deciding instead to follow Athos's order of letting him volunteer for the chair.

"I-If Aramisâ€| dallies onâ€| t-the way backâ€| to flirt with another barmaidâ€| I'm gonna kill him," grunted Athos tiredly, peering at his friend through the flop of hair that had fallen in front of his eyes.

To relieved to comment on the randomness that was Athos's statement Porthos snorted, "Don't think the whelp would let him get away with that even if he wanted to. The kid worries."

"H-How long?"

The grim look returned to Porthos's face, "Bout four hours I'd wager, possibly longer."

"Hopefully they're on route to Paris by now," groaned the swordsman, wincing as he forced his fingers and toes to move.

"You should try to rest," suggested Porthos softly, the worry returning when he noticed the exhaustion lining his friend's face. "We have time till Marcel's due to return, might as well make use of it."

The look Athos sent him told the larger musketeer how likely that possibility was. Sweat was already gleaming on the swordsman's face and as Porthos had no idea how tight the cuff had been tightened he could only imagine the pain his brother was in.

"You shouldn't 'ave volunteered," mumbled Porthos, guilt shining brightly in his eyes.

Athos shot him a look, "Better me than you my friend," grunted the swordsman.

Before Porthos could respond the door to their cell opened causing both men to tense, though the action caused Athos pain to do so.

"Thought we'd have longer till we saw your ugly mug again," grumbled Porthos, the fear and worry he was feeling at the unexpected visit thankfully masked.

"Well if you're not hungryâ€|" Shrugged Marcel, both musketeers

noticing the two bowls the man was holding and before either could say anything Porthos's stomach betrayed them by grumbling loudly causing the larger man to curse quietly and a flicker of amusement to erase some of the pain in Athos's eyes.

Moving to Porthos first Marcel handed him the bowl of bland but warm stew, ignoring the suspicious look the musketeer gave him as he took it.

"I'd sooner starve than let you feed me," growled Athos as the man came to stand in front of him, the musketeer's eyes narrowing as Marcel chuckled.

"Worry not musketeer," Marcel said using his free hand to unlock one of the cuffs that had yet to be significantly tightened, allowing the musketeer to have a hand free to eat. "I'll be back for the bowls soon, best eat while it's still warm."

"Recon it poisoned?" enquired Porthos once Marcel had left, prodding the stew hesitantly with the spoon as he spoke.

"Unlikely," reassured Athos as he rotated his now free wrist, relishing the fading pain. Once he was finished he turned his attention to the food given to them, as much as he didn't trust Marcel there was something that told him the man didn't truly want him dead, at least not yet anyway and because of that the swordsman decided the food was safe.

Upon seeing Athos devour a few bites with no immediate side-effects Porthos moved to devour his own, slightly relieved to know their captor didn't plan to starve them as well as torture them.

* * *

><p>"What?" Athos asked with a small hint of amusement in his voice as he noticed the way Porthos was staring at his spoon.<p>

Lifting his face to smirk at his friend Porthos replied, "remember that Red Guard I defeated with a fork?"

Athos snorted, he was pretty sure he would never forget that brilliant moment, sure Treville had lectured them for ages about dueling but seeing the smugness of that Red Guard shatter as Porthos fought and won against him with nothing but a dinner fork was completely worth it.

"I don't think that will work for you this time my friend," smiled the swordsman.

The amusement in Athos's eyes grew when Porthos pouted, "Could do."

"Not a fork," Athos pointed out, trying very hard not to laugh at the faces his friend was pulling.

Seeing the light return to his friend's face Porthos grinned and shrugged, unbothered by the man's words, "I could make it work."

"I have no doubt, but there's another fault in your master plan."

"Oh?" queried the larger man, immensely pleased that Athos was playing along.

"He's not a red guard," deadpanned the swordsman causing the larger musketeer to let out a booming laugh in response.

"Something tells me I missed quite a conversation," remarked Marcel as he entered the room, slightly unnerved to see both men in much lighter spirits than he had expected given their predicament.

Noticing the tenseness of Athos's frame Porthos sent his friend a look full of complete seriousness as he asked, "what about two spoons?" nodding down at the spoon in the swordsman's hand.

Letting out a snort at the imagery that comment produced as well as the completely confused look of their captor Athos actually frowned when Marcel took his bowl and spoon away from him and replaced the cuff on his wrist.

That frown quickly turned into a grimace as Marcel knelt down to sharply turned the mechanism on one of the ankle cuffs, causing it to tighten significantly, the musketeer barely biting back a scream of pain as he could practically feel his bones straining under the pressure.

Porthos noticed a small amount of blood escaping his brother's mouth and knew the man had bitten his cheek hard enough to draw blood in his effort to not let Marcel win by screaming.

When Marcel made his way over to him Porthos glared daggers at the man, a dangerous smirk coming to his face as he muttered, just loud enough for the man to hear him, "Definitely two spoons."

Marcel look thoroughly confused but picked up the dishes and moved to the door.

Pausing by the door with dishes in hand Marcel turned back and asked, "Are all musketeers as bizarre as you?" Porthos's response was simply to smirk at the man as he left.

* * *

><p>"How're you doing D'Art?" called Aramis with no small amount of worry in his voice.<p>

The pair had been racing hard down the road for a couple of hours and still had some ways to ride. Thankfully the ground had evened out but the mud caused no end of jostling from the horses and Aramis couldn't help but worry about his injured friend.

Looking over his shoulder once he realized his friend had yet to respond he found himself cursing under his breath at the pale complexion and trembling frame the young Gascon was sporting. It also looked like the only reason the boy hadn't replied was because all of his energy was going on not crying out in pain.

Internally berating himself for letting the boy get so bad Aramis slowed his horse until it was level with D'Artagnan's own mare, the

medic's arrival startling the pale boy slightly and caused him to raise an eyebrow in question.

"We should stop," Aramis explained, the words hard to get out as every instinct wanted nothing more than to race to Paris no matter the cost.

D'Artagnan's eyes widened and the boy forced himself to sit upright in the saddle, "No!"

"You're in pain, you need a break," reasoned the medic though there was a traitorous part of him that was jumping with joy at the boy's resistance.

Glaring at the medic, D'Artagnan forced his face to become expressionless. He had already caused enough of a delay he refused to cause anymore. "I'm fine," he declared firmly before urging his horse on harder, leaving Aramis to sigh at his stubbornness before doing the same.

Throughout this entire exchange neither man noticed the gleam of a spyglass some distance behind them, nor the grin the user wore when he realized he was gaining on his prey.

13. Downhill

****Evening My Lovelies!****

****We're in for some drama today, Hope you're all ready!****

****Notes On Reviews:****

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Hahaha I think it needs to happen now :) I'm not quite sure how it'll come about but I really want it to happen now you've mentioned it and you'd be correct in your thinking that it's not a good thing. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - Now that would give him an interesting story to tell lol. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Katie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Ermmm you may not like me today then. Sorry in advance! Enjoy the new chapter! x

Guest: Thanks for the review - You're no worse than me lol We're getting some more of it tonight as well. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Sorrry! There's a cliffy today as well I'm afraid. Glad you liked the banter. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Haha very true though it could be said that there are no musketeers like them lol :D The plan will come to light in a couple of chapters time, though there's a hint for it tonight. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Deana: Thanks for the review - Then you're in luck as we'll be finding out today. Enjoy the new chapter! x

watlocked: Thanks for the review - Like mentor like student :) That's a very good point, poor Treville's just waiting for answers at the garrison... I'll bring him in in couple of chapters time. I've missed writing him. D'Art and Aramis are definitely about to find trouble which is not going to be good considering their current state. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - Gotta have a bit of randomness every now and then :) ... Plus Athos needed the levity considering what's happening to him :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - The spy definitely doesnt mean anything good for our boys but as to why he's there will come out in a few chapters time. I think D'Arts definition of fine greatly contradicts everyone elses lol We're going to get some more protective moments today so hope you like them :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

authorwannabel01: Thanks for the review - Haha Glad you liked it, as i said I have no idea where it came from but I went with it lol :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the reviews - Marcel's reasons for acting strange will come to light fairly soon... couple of chapters time probably. I dont think Porthos is going to forgive himself for quite a while... he and Athos will need to have a chat once they're free. As to who the spy is... We find out what they're doing today but as to who sent them you'll have to wait a bit. Tensions are running quite high between the boys but given what's happening today they'll be putting that to one side for a bit i should imagine. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - It's only going to get worse for our boys today I'm afraid... Aramis being in two minds is only going to add to his guilt and give him more to apologize for (at least in his mind anyway) I think the only reason his mother-hen tendencies didnt come out in full force is because of how long they've known D'Art. The situation is forcing him to worry about either his dearest friends who he's known and fought beside for years or his newest friend he's only known a couple of months. Either way it'll lead to an emotional chat later on for us :D The other boys definitely needed the distraction, especially poor Athos. Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always many thanks and much love for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Thirteen: Downhill
*

The attack came out of nowhere. One minute Aramis had been stroking the muzzle of his horse; they had stopped at a small river to give the horses a chance to drink while the men stretched out the muscles that had become tight and painful from hours hard riding. Aramis had

once again brought up the idea of creating some pain medication for the pale Gascon and once again the boy had steadfastly refused it, insisting that they wouldn't be stopping long enough for the medic to make anything anyway.

Then, the next thing the Spaniard knew, his horse was flinging him into the water as the beast reared up once an all too familiar sound pierced the air.

"ARAMIS!" screamed D'Artagnan as he scrambled back to his feet, eyes widening in horror as they flickered between the incoming figures and the sight of his brother trying to disentangle himself from the reeds and other vegetation in the riverbed.

"D'ART!" cried Aramis breathlessly; cursing in Spanish as he tugged viciously at the root his foot had become tangled in while trying to keep his head above the water. Honestly he wasn't even sure how that happened but he had more important things to worry about then trying to work it out.

From his spot in the river Aramis couldn't see what was happening but the faint sound of a blade emerging from it's sheath spurred the Spaniard on.

"We have nothing you want!" shouted D'Artagnan, hoping he could stall the attackers long enough for Aramis to free himself. "Unless you want to face musketeers I suggest you leave now!"

At his words a man emerged from the shadows, the smoking pistol in his hand telling the Gascon he was the one who had fired the shot.

"Musketeers?" grinned the man showing his yellow teeth as he did so. "All I see is you boy and you're hardly a musketeer."

"No but I am!" roared a dripping wet Aramis, the Spaniard followed up his words by throwing a large rock, barely resisting the urge to boast when the projectile smacked into the man's hand hard enough to cause him to swear and lose his grip on his pistol.

"That's mighty fine aim you've got there musketeer," sneered the bandit as he bent down to pick up his pistol, his eyes never leaving Aramis as he did so. "Your skills could earn you a decent amount of coin with me and my boys if you ever get sick of dealing with pompous nobles."

Aramis blinked, was this bandit really trying to recruit him in the midst of an ambush?

"It'll be hard to join a dead man," snarled the medic, settling into a battle ready stance. Out of the corner of his eye he noticed D'Artagnan edging his way towards his mare and the Spaniard fought a smirk as he remembered D'Artagnan placing the throwing knives he had been practicing with lately into his saddlebags before they left for the meeting place.

The bandit shrugged, "Have it your way musketeer, I get paid so long as you don't reach Paris."

The bandit's words took on a hard edge as he spoke and within moments

of him speaking a small group of armed men emerged from the trees.

* * *

><p>"Enough!" roared Porthos, blood trickling down his wrists from where the cuff dug into his skin but the musketeer paid it no attention, all his attention focused on the screaming form of his dearest friend. "Leave him alone!"<p>

"He knew the arrangement before volunteering," said Marcel, his face strangely tight and uncomfortable as he stood in front of a now panting Athos.

"Let me take his place!" pleaded Porthos, desperation filling his voice as his eyes never left the barely conscious form of Athos.

"Nâ€|No" groaned the swordsman; conscious enough to know he needed to protect his brother.

Porthos ignore him and forced his gaze to move to Marcel, "Please."

"D-Don'tâ€|y-youâ€| dare," hissed Athos weakly with as much authority as he could muster, which, given his present state, was not much.

Marcel seemed to be considering it for a moment and Porthos felt hope growing within him. Both he and Athos had noted how uncomfortable the man appeared to be with this torture method and now Porthos was praying that the man's unease would save his brother from more pain.

Even from where he was sitting Porthos could already see the bruises beginning to form around the edges of each of the cuffs and he could only imagine the damage that had been done to the bones.

At the moment the most attention seemed to be focused on the ankle cuffs, no doubt devised to ensure escape was impossible and judging by the agonized scream that had just torn it's way out of Athos's throat the bones in the swordsman's left ankle were cracked, if not broken.

"He made his choice," Marcel said quietly after a few moments, those four words shattering Porthos's hope.

"And I'm making the same one, let me take his place!"

"I can't," whispered Marcel, his eyes instantly widening when he realized what he had let slip.

Porthos's eyes narrowed, his worry over his brothers now being channeled into anger at the man before him.

"Why not!" he screamed, thrashing against the chains keeping him from protecting his friend.

"Because," stated a voice, causing Marcel to tense and Porthos to startle slightly, "that's not how this works monsieur musketeer. We have other plans for you."

* * *

><p>"D'ART!" cried Aramis as he expertly ducked what would have been a fatal blow; his eyes rapidly seeking out the young Gascon whose cries had caught his attention. He had barely a moment to watch D'Artagnan fall to one knee, his unbroken arm clutching his injured one tightly, the boy's eyes scrunched in pain before the medic's attacker recovered from his failed attack and returned for another attempt.<p>

With his attention redirected the Spaniard missed how close the Gascon came to getting a sword through the chest, only the boy's quick thinking allowed him to escape the worst of the blow, his leg shooting out at the last moment, hitting the bandit's shin hard causing his balance to falter and forcing him to step back to regain it. D'Artagnan still took a fairly serious gash to his chest that would most definitely be in need of stitching soon but considering the alternative the boy took the win.

Pushing through the pain in his arm, which had only intensified when the bandit had hit it with the side of his blade, D'Artagnan scrambled for the last of his throwing knives, which had fallen from his hand after the attack to his arm. Without even thinking D'Artagnan launched himself at the recovering bandit, driving the small blade deep into the man's throat. Unfortunately the Gascon hadn't considered that the momentum of his attack would send both men to the ground and as such the young man found himself unable to see for several moments as a blinding white light overtook his vision when his broken arm hit the ground, caught between the bandit's chest and his own.

What finally forced the Gascon's pain down was the all too familiar boom of a pistol followed immediately by a scream of pain and a slew of, what he could only assume to be, Spanish curses.

"A-Aramis!" D'Artagnan rasped, ignoring the dizzy spell that threatened to knock him back on his behind he sharply turned just in time to see Aramis crumple to his knees, the smug bandit leader smirking at him, smoking pistol still in hand.

"ARAMIS!" he cried again, his fear skyrocketing when the medic fell forward, just barely managing to get his hand out to brace himself.

Without thinking D'Artagnan yanked his throwing dagger from the dead bandit's throat and launched it through the air towards the unsuspecting bandit leader.

D'Artagnan watched with an expressionless mask as the blade found purchase in the man's skin. The wound wasn't immediately fatal but would require attention straight away if the man wanted to keep living.

Rising on shaking legs, alarm growing within him when he noticed the tremors affecting his frame. With a deep breath the Gascon forced his focus to return to the fact that his friendâ€¦| _brother?_ Had been shot.

In the distance D'Artagnan could just make out the sounds of people

approaching and could only assume it was more of the bandit group. Not willing to risk waiting around to see if he was correct he grabbed the dead bandit's sword, sliding the blade in between his belt before he ran as fast as his legs could carry him to his horse.

Musketeer horses are trained to handle battlefield situations and the only reasons Aramis's had reared at the start of the attack was because the shot had landed mere centimeters from it. D'Artagnan's mare on the other hand was not as well trained, making her slightly skittish around gunfire. Thankfully what the animal lacked with training it made up with in loyalty, as she had not strayed far from her rider.

Grimacing in pain D'Artagnan swung himself up into the saddle, not for the first time grateful for the hours and hours he had spent during his childhood mastering his riding skills.

"**ARAMIS!**" Bellowed the Gascon as he lightly held the reigns in his broken hand, gritting his teeth against the pain as he did so. When the Spaniard finally managed to lift his head D'Artagnan flung his good arm out to him, gripping the man's wrist tightly as he galloped past and by using most of his remaining strength he managed to use the momentum to pull his friend up onto his horse.

"H-How bad 'Mis?" he panted, using his good arm to keep the medic's arm around his waist.

"Al diablo con eso duele" (_Fuck that hurts) _swore Aramis, his grip on D'Artagnan's shirt tightening as a sharp wave of pain shot through him

"'Mis?" D'Artagnan asked again, worry lacing his voice as he tilted his head slightly so he could risk a fleeting look at his friend, alarm growing at the paleness of the man's skin.

"S-Shoulder," answered Aramis through gritted teeth. "It's going to need some sort of tending soon." He admitted guiltily, hating to be the reason his brothers were in Marcel's hands for a longer span of time.

"Got it," nodded the Gascon, his eyes turning hard as they searched out anywhere that might be a safe place for them to rest. He could feel Aramis's blood seeping into his shirt from where the musketeer was resting against him and he could feel his own soaking the front of his tunic courtesy of the bandit's blade.

"Just stay awake," he commanded, a slight pleading tone entering his voice. "I'll find us somewhere but stay with me okay."

14. TLC

****Evening My Lovelies****

****D'Art's being a bit of a badass today :D and I'm going to be horrible and leave you all waiting to see what's in store for Athos and Porthos :)****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - He's not having the best luck that's for sure. Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - I'm gonna count that as a good thing lol :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Bwhahaa That's very true, they'd be skint within a week with me there XD D'Art's got a key part to play today, bit of a badass. Porthos and Athos on the other hand... well you'll just have to wait and see. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Well Porthos has gotten off pretty light... so far :D I have some stuff in mind for him but you'll have to wait till tomorrow. The ambush has definitely set the boys back quite a bit and its Porthos and Athos that are going to suffer for it (not that the others havent but you get what I mean) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - Oh our boys are going to utilize their musketeer stubbornness to ensure they reach Paris as fast as they can... Can't guarantee the condition they'll be in when they get there though. Enjoy the new chapter! x

watlocked: Thanks for the review - I'm glad you're liking it so far :) Dont worry things wont be getting wrapped up too soon. I have some evil plans in store for Porthos which we'll be seeing tomorrow, another serious bit of whumpage for Athos in a later chapter plus some other whumpage moments as we go with lots of drama and cute moments mixed in. Enjoy the new chapter! x

MoonlightTaylor (Guest): Thanks for the review - Yep there's a devious plan in mind, but you'll have to wait to find out what it all is :D An interesting idea as to who the partner is but no it's not her, we'll be finding out tomorrow so I wont be keeping you in suspense for long. Athos definitely isn't fairing well. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - He may wish to do that but he's really not in the best shape to do so. Aramis's guilt is definitely growing as everything progresses, even more so when he learns how much time they've lost because of the ambush. Porthos is due some pain now and we'll be seeing what's going on tomorrow. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - That ambush did neither man any favors, in fact the only good thing that might have come out of it was that they've gained a weapon now. Athos is seriously suffering but is trying to remain stoic and unaffected but its not really working any more. We'll be finding out the other plans for Porthos tomorrow but for now we're with our other boys. Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

* * *

><p>Chapter Fourteen: TLC
*>

D'Artagnan didn't think it was possible to feel the amount of relief he felt when he spotted what appeared to be an abandoned barn.

They had been riding for little over an hour and despite passing a couple of possible resting locations the Gascon had refused to stop until he was sure they were no longer being followed.

He had tried to keep Aramis engaged and talking throughout their ride but his own injuries coupled with the stress of the situation had quickly halted every conversation attempt.

"'Mis?" D'Artagnan called hesitantly, twisting ever so slightly so he could glance at his friend over his shoulder. The Spaniard was in a bad way but to D'Artagnan's great relief, was clinging stubbornly on to consciousness.

"I've found somewhere we can stop, just hold on a little longer okay?" the boy pleaded. Hearing the fear and worry in his voice Aramis tightened the grip he had on the boy's hand, lacking all energy to form a verbal response.

Thankfully Aramis's horse had followed D'Artagnan's mare when they left the ambush sight so they would have access to the Spaniard's medical supplies.

* * *

><p>Stopping just shy of the barn D'Artagnan took a moment to observe the area, only dismounting when he was sure there was no one else there.<p>

The barn itself looked deserted, the roof had seen better days and was even missing in some parts but the walls were sturdy and would offer some protection from the harsh winds that had picked up over the last little while. All in all it was about the best the two injured men could hope for during such a desperate time.

"Come on Aramis," said D'Artagnan softly once he had confirmed that the barn was indeed empty. He was getting increasingly worried about his friend, the man had lost a lot of blood so clearly the wound was worse than the man wanted him to believe. This was made all the more worrying by the fact that D'Artagnan was beginning to feel lightheaded himself from his own wounds.

Aramis opened an exhausted eye at D'Artagnan's call and despite the pain that shot through him whenever he moved, he let the Gascon guide him off of the horse, a small whimper of pain escaping him as his chest knocked against the horse's side.

Without wasting a minute D'Artagnan used his good arm to sling Aramis's arm over his shoulder before directing them into the barn, stopping only to grab the saddlebag off of the Spaniard's horse that he knew contained the man's medical supplies.

* * *

><p>Once inside D'Artagnan eased the injured medic down to the ground, cursing under his breath as he then attempted to get the man's shirt open with only one useable hand. Eventually he gave up and used the stolen blade to cut away the fabric, allowing him the first glimpse of the wound.<p>

"That is not your shoulder 'Mis," scolded the Gascon, his eyes widening in panic as he took in the damage done to his friend.

"â€|C-Close enough," sighed the medic tiredly, his eyelids drooping as he spoke.

"No, no, no" panicked D'Artagnan as he rapidly tapped the man's face gently in an effort to rouse him. "I don't know what I'm doing Aramis! You have to help me!"

Whether the tapping had woken him or the panic in D'Artagnan's voice he didn't know but Aramis forced his eyes open, gritting his teeth as a wave of pain washed over him.

Looking up at his pale, nervous friend Aramis couldn't stop the guilt that built up within in. His friend was hurt, was in god knows how much pain and here he was worried out of his mind for the medic, who apparently couldn't dodge a simple pistol shot properly.

"None of that," scolded the Gascon gently, though whether because of the Spaniards thoughts or because his eyes had begun to close again Aramis didn't know but he forced his eyes open again and offered the panicking young man the most reassuring smile he could manage.

"E-Extract," instructed the medic through gritted teeth, "C-Cleanâ€|S-Stitch and wrap."

Had he had the energy Aramis would have chuckled when he heard D'Artagnan practically chanting the four instructions he had just given him.

With his remaining energy Aramis gripped D'Artagnan's hand in his own, effectively stilling the boy's worried rambling.

" 'Mis?"

"You've got this," grinned the medic weakly, the faith in his eyes silencing any protest that might have begun to form on the Gascon's tongue, forcing him to nod instead. Seeing this Aramis let his body relax, knowing that it would be easier on both on them if he were out for this.

* * *

><p>Seeing his friend suddenly go limp had nearly given D'Artagnan a heart attack and it was only when he absently put his hand on the man's chest and felt the blood drying there that D'Artagnan pushed all panic out of his mind and set to work.<p>

It had taken him longer then he had anticipated gathering the

supplies he needed from the medic's saddlebag and now, sat with a set of tweezers in his shaking hand D'Artagnan felt the crushing weight of self-doubt settle on his shoulders. One wrong move and he could make the situation much worse and that notion refused to leave his mind, stilling his hand every time he went close to the wound.

It wasn't until a few moments later when Aramis let out a small yet heartbreaking whimper of pain that D'Artagnan was finally able to break free of his panic induced haze. Taking a deep breath in hopes to settle his racing heart and calm his trembling hands he began work removing the bullet.

D'Artagnan found that once he had removed the bullet things began easier; the act of carefully removing any foreign matter such as bits of clothing from the wound was oddly calming to the young man. Thankfully the medic hadn't been wearing multiple layers when he was shot so there wasn't much that needed removing, the only problem the Gascon encountered was the lack of liquids at hand to clean the wound.

Even with his minimal training the Gascon knew that to have a better chance of warding off any infections they would need to wash the wound with alcohol, only problem being that he had none to use. They had some water but without knowing how long it would be until Aramis could move the Gascon was wary about using it for the wound.

Muttering a Gascony curse under his breath D'Artagnan abandoned the idea of washing the wound, hoping that they had treated the wound soon enough to prevent infection and instead set to work stitching the wound close.

It was difficult to get started, given that he had only one usable hand but before long D'Artagnan found himself relaxing somewhat, this was the one part of the whole thing that he had experience with. Admittedly that experience was mostly on animals or small wounds on the farm hands that worked for him and his father. He had never stitched such a grievous wound like Aramis's before but he theorized that it would be no different than stitching anything else and merely resolved to ensure his stitches wouldn't leave his friend with a garish scar that would hardly put him in good standing with the man who's approval he craved almost as much as Athos's.

Thinking of the man who had quickly become his mentor sent a stab of worry through the Gascon's heart. The ambush and subsequent treatment had easily set the pair back several hours, added to that was the fact that Aramis would need time to recover before he was well enough to ride and that it was now beginning to get dark meant that they wouldn't be leaving for Paris until the next morning at the earliest, meaning that their friends were going to be in Marcel's clutches longer than they had anticipated, suffering through god knows what while he and Aramis rested their wounds.

Shaking his head D'Artagnan pushed all thoughts of Athos, Porthos and the horrors they could be enduring from his mind. Neither musketeer would wish to see him so distracted while tending to Aramis so he focused all his attention on the unconscious Spaniard in front of him.

Night was really beginning to set in when D'Artagnan decided there

was little more he could do for his friend. By this point the young man's hands were now coated in the blood of his friend and were shaking terribly. D'Artagnan knew that part of this was down to his own blood loss but he also knew that he was in no condition to be attempting to stitch up his own wound right now. Instead D'Artagnan chose to scrunch up the remaining bandages and use his good arm to put pressure on his wound with them. It wasn't perfect by any means and Aramis would most likely rip him a new one when he awoke but it was all he could do for now.

* * *

><p>Waking up to the first rays of sunshine was always an annoyance to Aramis, though when it was coupled with the agonizing pain of his recent wound it was just plain cruel.<p>

Groaning, both at the pain and the morning glare, he slowly moved his hand to his chest, slipping it under the loose bandages covering his wound. The marksman would be lying if he said he wasn't surprised by the neatness of the stitches he could feel. He felt his heart warm with affection as he realized the trouble the boy must have gone through to ensure the stitches were as neat as possible.

Speaking of the boy Aramis was also surprised that the exuberant Gascon hadn't practically jumped on him when he realized he was awake.

Biting back a hiss of pain Aramis propped himself up on his elbow as his tired eyes searched for his missing friend. A fond smile gracing his tired face as he saw the boy curled up by the remnants of a fire the marksman had no idea had been started.

The musketeer was tempted to let the boy sleep, knowing that the pain of his injuries must be draining the lad's reserves but the medic in him had forced it's way to the forefront when he noticed how pale the typically tanned Gascon had gotten.

15. New Arrival

****Evening My Lovelies ****

****We're back with Porthos and Athos today and thinks aren't looking good. ****

****I'm hoping Marcel in this chapter will still make sense and wont seem as a complete role-reversal.****

****Notes On The Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - Glad you liked it :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Katie (Guest): Thanks for the review - There's not really a cliffy today so that's good. You'll have to wait till tomorrow to find out about D'Art. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Guest: Thanks for the review - You'll have to wait till tomorrow for some more D'Art but you'll be pleased to know he'll probably get hurt again before all this is over. Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - There's no cliffy today so hopefully no pouting. We'll be needing the hate-o-meter today and we have someone new to use it on. Aramis is definitely impressed... or he will be when we get back to him. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - The suspense is only going to get worse as I'm going to keep you all waiting until tomorrow :) I think D'Art would be scared of Aramis's reaction if he did messy stitches lol. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - Not like Aramis had much choice but yeah he had faith :) though he might be giving the pup some medical training when all this is over. Enjoy the new chapter! x

SunnyFreckles (Guest): Thanks for the review - Welcome :) I hope you enjoyed your binge of the story so far :) Unfortunately it's none of the people you guessed though I am seriously considering having Milady appear in my next story (which i may or may not be already planning despite this one being nowhere near finished) Well we're getting an Athos moment today so hopefully you'll like that (though he is getting hurt). I have plenty Athos moments planned so worry not :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

authorwannabel01: Thanks for the review - Unfortunately you'll be waiting until tomorrow to see Aramis's reaction. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Jmp (Guest): Thanks for the review - Catch up is good as you can binge :) hope you enjoyed it. Viv will be coming into the story soon just trying to get to the right moment. Some more whumpage today :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - I know I promised so here it is. Theres some Athos whumpage as well, just for you :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - Yeah our musketeers will not be impressed. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - Yeah a lot of time lost which is not good for our boys and even more times going to be lost while they deal with D'Art tomorrow. Aramis's guilt is definitely growing. Enjoy the new chapter! x

watlocked: Thanks for the review - I know I'm mean for making you wait and I'm doing it again today by making you wait for D'Art new :D Aramis will be having a rant, gotta love Aramis rants. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the reviews - Hopefully today will clear up some of your confusion with Marcel. I have a plan in mind for Marcel so I'm hoping its coming across that way. Aramis said shoulder more so D'Art wouldnt worry as much but I've realized it probably didnt come across that way so sorry! Treville will be having words with them when they eventually get back. Enjoy the new chapter! x

MicheeO: Thanks for the reviews - torment coming to an end? Hell no! I'm far to evil to end it so early on mwhahaha. D'Arts definitely a

magnet for trouble. We'll be learning who the mystery person is today so hopefully that'll end some of the confusion. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - Ooooooh I DO love having you all pulled in two directions which is why I've done it again today mwhahaha :D I loved writing panicked D'Art though I'm think Aramis might be inclined to give the pup medic training (at least basic stuff) once all this is over. We had emotional whump yesterday and now we we have physical whump today. Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love many thanks for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading ****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Fifteen: New Arrival
**

"ENOUGH!" bellowed Marcel, having finally reached his limit at watching his companion work over the now bloody musketeer.

When the newcomer refused to even acknowledge hearing him Marcel gripped the man by the arm and pulled him away from his victim.

"Marcel," growled the man, his anger now being directed at him instead. "What do you think you're doing?"

"Look at him Daviau!" Marcel exclaimed, gesturing wildly to the seemingly unconscious musketeer. "Do anything else and you risk killing him."

Daviau calmed slightly at Marcel's words and turned to better observed the man he had been working over. The musketeer was a bloody mess, at least one of his eyes were swollen shut, both his nose and lips were coated with blood, the awkward way he was standing spoke to several, if not more, broken ribs and that was only the beginning.

"I suppose it would be difficult to get answers from a dead man." Daviau mused with a coldness that set Marcel on edge.

"Answers? You haven't asked him anything!"

Daviau scoffed, "He knows what we wish to know, musketeer's don't take on idiotsâ€| just stubborn fools apparently."

"Why do this?" Marcel asked, the whole situation not sitting well with the man.

"Why?" Daviau mimicked turning around to face Marcel, his expression both dark and questioning. "You know full well why. My brother had just turned eighteen when he was sent on that farce of a mission! Barely out of his childhood and his life's over. I refuse to live any longer without bringing those responsible for that to justice!"

Both men were so into their argument that neither noticed Porthos's eyes crack open slightly nor the broken smirk that tugged at his bloody lips at the clear evidence of the pair's discourse.

"I know that!" snapped Marcel, now practically standing chest to chest with Daviau. "But the Spaniard â€" "

Daviau scoffed, his voice thick with condescension, "The Spaniard is playing you for a fool and you're letting him do it."

This stilled some of Marcel's burning anger, seeing this Daviau continued.

"Twenty men massacred and only two survived and you're telling me that only Marsac had the initiative to search for answers?"

_Shit! _Swore Porthos internally. He knew that at one point Aramis had gone searching for answers but it was so soon after the attack and the man's mental health was in such a fragile state that both Porthos and Athos had convinced him from searching further. To the larger musketeer's knowledge their attempts had been successful and the medic had focused on healing and moving forward and hadn't considered delving deeper into the matter until Marsac showed up again.

The fact that this newcomer seemed to have been on friendlier terms with Marsac worried Porthos. If the former musketeer had shared his suspicions on the truth behind the attack before searching for Aramis then he and his brothers were in a lot more trouble than they had originally thought.

"If you're so sure that whatever the Spaniard is going to bring back is false, why let him go in the first place?"

"Call it an experiment," shrugged Daviau, picking up a rag and wiping away the drying blood from his knuckles.

"An experiment?" snarled Marcel, anger rising to the surface once again, "You play on my grief and desire for justice, a desire we both share, for an experiment!?"

Irritated by the man's tone Daviau sighed, dropped the now bloody rag and punched Marcel in the stomach hard enough to knock the air out of the man and have him curling in on himself.

Gripping Marcel by the shoulder with a vice-like grip Daviau dipped his head down so he was speaking directly into the man's ear.

"You wouldn't even have a chance to see justice done if it wasn't for me," growled Daviau darkly, his voice sending shivers down even Porthos's spine. "If it hadn't been for me you would still be wallowing away in grief while trying to raise that orphaned nephew of yours. This plan was **my** idea and based off of **my** information. I won't let anyone, not even you, stop me from getting what I want." Tightening his grip on Marcel's shoulder, drawing a hiss of pain from the still slightly breathless man, "Question me again and I won't hesitate to end you, remember that."

Marcel gasped in pain as Daviau released the grip on his shoulder, waiting until the man had left the room before collapsing against the

wall as he tried to regain his composure.

"He'll kill you before this is over," grunted Porthos, startling Marcel whose head shot up to stare at him. "I've seen people like 'imâ€¦ Once you've outlived your purpose you're dead."

Marcel's eyes hardened at the musketeer's words but Porthos could see the doubt in his eyes.

"He'll end you and your friend's before even thinking of me," spat Marcel embarrassment at being seen in such a state flooding into him and making him more vindictive.

Porthos attempted a shrug, it was barely noticeable given the man's condition but Marcel noted what it was. "We've dealt with worse."

Marcel scoffed, shaking his head at the bravado the musketeer was showing even now as bloodied and battered as he was.

Porthos was silent for a moment as he observed the man, his head tilting to rest against his raised arm. "You're scared of 'im"

The musketeer's words drew an immediate reaction from Marcel, the man letting out a low grow and glaring daggers at him.

"You seem quite confident in you and your friend's ability to get out of here alive," remarked Marcel, attempting to draw the conversation away from his apparently easily noticeable fear of Daviau.

"They aint let me down yet."

The nonchalance with which the musketeer was speaking, despite the pain doing so seemed to cause him, irked Marcel to no end but eventually his curiosity won out over his irritation.

"Even if half of your group is dead?"

Porthos felt his blood go cold and with a renewed strength powered by his fear he forced himself to stand up straighter, his mind not even registering the shakiness of his legs as they struggled to hold his weight or the relief his arms felt at no longer carrying it all.

"What did you say?"

"You heard me."

"What. Did. You. Do?" growled Porthos, somehow managing to sound almost feral with his anger despite his broken appearance.

Marcel smirked, though it didn't reach his eyes and there was a hint of guilt within them that only fanned the flames of Porthos's anger.

"Men were sent toâ€¦ delay, their return to Paris."

Porthos opened his mouth to respond and no doubt threaten serious bodily harm to the man before him but before he could there was a sharp, sudden pain to the back of his head that had him plummeting

into unconsciousness.

"D-Daviau!" Marcel stuttered, surprised he had been so focused on the musketeer that he hadn't even noticed the return of the man.

"They're here to answer my questions and to pay for the faults of their pathetic excuse of brotherhood," snarled Daviau as he stalked up to Marcel. "They're not here for you to engage in idle chitchat."

Marcel hid his glare at the man's tone by lowering his head in a subservient fashion.

"Now then," remarked Daviau, seemingly pleased with Marcel's behavior. "This one was too stubborn to do what was best for him but maybe the other will be more agreeable, especially now he's had some time to consider his position."

Both men turned then to face a glaring and gagged Athos. The man was barely conscious, blood staining each of the cuffs keeping him locked in the chair and sweat drenching his face but despite all this the musketeer had put up a valiant fight when the assault on Porthos began.

Both Daviau and Marcel had been slightly impressed by the threats and curses that had spewed from the former noble's mouth when Porthos was attacked but Daviau had eventually gagged him as he claimed he was distracting him from his work. Since then Athos's pain-filled eyes had never stopped glaring at the two men causing his brother pain.

"So," drawled Daviau casually as he swatted down in front of Athos, slowly tightening one of the vices as he spoke. "Feel like talking yet?"

Athos could feel his bones straining against the pressure and the agony of it made him want to scream. It was only his own stubbornness and the anger he felt for his brother's treatment that had him using all his remaining strength to not show just how much pain he was actually in.

"Musketeers sure like their stubborn men," remarked Daviau, a dangerous glint entering his eyes that would have sent warning bells off in Athos's mind had he not been fighting against the overwhelming pain his body was in. "I wonder how long that stubbornness will last."

With that Daviau sharply turned the cuff, a sickening crack piercing the air, as the bone was no longer able to handle the pressure. This was followed immediately by an excruciatingly painful sounding scream from Athos, the musketeer's head sharply turned skyward and his whole frame went rigidly tense as the pain shot through him.

Giving the musketeer no time to recover Daviau ripped off the gag and stared expectantly at the swordsman.

As the pain shot through him Athos allowed himself a moment to try and compose himself, his breathing was fast and shallow and there were black spots dancing across his vision which should have been

further cause for concern but despite all this he remained defiant, bringing his head back level with Daviau's before spitting harshly into the man's face, relishing in the outraged look on his face as the spit hit him right in the eye.

"Go! To Hell!" rasped the musketeer with the very last of his quickly fading strength.

Daviau's anger only grew at Athos's words as did the dark look in his eyes and the last thing Athos heard was "You first musketeer."

16. TLC II

****Evening My Lovelies****

****We're soooooooo close to 200 reviews! ****

****Also would you guys like to see Porthos having a badass moment? I'm hoping the answer's yes as we're getting one tomorrow that I really like :D****

****Notes On Reviews:****

Deana: Thanks for the review - I know, I'm so mean :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - We're back with D'Art and Aramis today, I haven't forgotten them :) We're also going to see a bit of Treville as well. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - He can try but our boys will be tough to break. Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - Glad you're having fun hating our new baddie :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - You'll probably feel a little bit better for our boys in tomorrows chapter and we'll be checking in with D'Art and Aramis today. Enjoy the new chapter! x

watlocked: Thanks for the review - Yeah probably not the best thing to rile up your captors, especially when they've already tortured the pair of you but oh well makes for entertaining reading. I'm really glad you think the Marcel/Daviau dynamic still fits in with what read so far :D To answer your question about Aramis rants I LOVE writing them. I have loads of fun writing them so I'd say (or at least hope) its as fun for me to write as it is for you to read. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - Yeah our boys don't break easily :) I don't know if its more effective when coming from a posh mouth but it's definitely more fun :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - I thinks its just poor everyone at this point lol. Marcel might try for a change of heart at some point if the opportunity arises... is that something we'd want to see happen? Enjoy the new chapter! x

MicheeO: Thanks for the review - Oh yeah Daviau's definitely a bad

one :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - :(Your alternate reality idea was such a heartbreaking idea... and now my evil brain's tempted to write it! Would you like to see Marcel help out our boys? I have the perfect opportunity for him to do so but I don't know? Well you'll be glad to know we're back with our pup and Spaniard today :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Sixteen: TLC II
</p></div>
<div data-bbox="77 354 814 387" data-label="Text">
<p>"D'Art!" called Aramis, worry colouring his voice as he stared helplessly at the unmoving form of his newest friend.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox="77 400 898 446" data-label="Text">
<p>With a groan of pain Aramis forced himself up into a seated position, the new height allowing him a slightly better view of the Gascon.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox="77 461 902 522" data-label="Text">
<p>"You're going to make me get up and come to you aren't you?" muttered the medic, more to himself than to the Gascon. Too worried about D'Artagnan to hide his own pain Aramis forced himself up onto his shaking legs with no small amount of groans and hisses of pain.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox="77 536 902 627" data-label="Text">
<p>Once he was vertical and the dizzy spell that threatened to send him back to the ground had passed, or at least had passed to the point where he was somewhat confident he wouldn't fall flat on his ass, Aramis began making his way over to the Gascon, thankful that the boy wasn't too far away from him as his whole body was very weak from the blood loss.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox="77 642 876 688" data-label="Text">
<p>When he was close enough the medic allowed his legs to give out and he sank to the floor, biting back a hiss of pain as his hand instinctively came up to rest against his wound.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox="77 702 889 750" data-label="Text">
<p>"Come on D'Art," called Aramis softly as he gently rolled the Gascon onto his back, his eyes going wide in surprise as he saw the blood staining the young man's shirt.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox="77 763 902 825" data-label="Text">
<p>"Of course you wouldn't mention anything about this yesterday," huffed the medic, a shaky hand coming up to run through his hair. "It would be **far **too simple for you to be honest and let me know when you're in pain for once wouldn't it.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox="77 838 902 884" data-label="Text">
<p>Whilst settled in mid rant Aramis began pulling through what remained of his medical supplies, wincing slightly when he saw what little he had left.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox="77 898 889 961" data-label="Text">
<p>"I mean, it's apparently perfectly fine for you to worry yourself to death over us but heaven forbid we try to do the same for you, you stubborn Gascon." Having prepared what he needed Aramis turned back to the unconscious boy, gently tapping his face as he continued to</p>
</div>

rant despite the fact the boy couldn't hear him. "Come on D'Art, you need to wake up so I can tell you off and know you've heard me. If you die without giving me thatâ€¦ I-I'll never forgive you."

"mmmm" moaned D'Artagnan weakly as he tried to move away from the hands now causing him pain.

"Easy D'Art," soothed the medic, a small amount of relief hitting him as he saw the Gascon's eyes open.

"â€¦'Mis?"

"Yes my friend?" Aramis answered, his eyes never leaving the Gascon's chest as he examined the wound. Thankfully the gash didn't appear to be showing any signs of infection but was still slowly bleeding and Aramis knew that if he didn't stop it soon D'Artagnan would be in serious trouble.

"â€¦Y're aw'ke?" came the mumbled response from the barely conscious Gascon. Had the situation not been as serious as it was Aramis might have laughed at the look of complete confusing now gracing his young friend's face.

"How astute of you."

D'Artagnan's face scrunched up then as if he was trying to decide how best to say whatever he was about to. Seeing this Aramis paused in his ministrations and watched the boy for a minute before returning to his work.

"â€¦N't dead?" asked D'Artagnan, his voice sounding more vulnerable then Aramis had ever heard it. So much so that it made the medic pause, warmth filling his heart as he gently stroked the young man's cheek, all thoughts of ranting at the injured boy flying from his mind.

"Not dead," he confirmed softly, "I have my life thanks to you. Now, let me do the same for you."

D'Artagnan seemed to relax at his words, a small smile appearing on his face for a moment until a grimace took it's place as Aramis began to sew the wound closed.

Despite the pain his current position was causing him the medic kept hunched over the boy as he worked, only pausing to ensure the Gascon did not fall asleep again, choosing instead to keep him occupied by talking to him.

"You know Athos is going to tell you off for this right?"

D'Artagnan's face scrunched up again as he squirmed either against the idea or against the pain.

This time Aramis couldn't hold back a few chuckles, "Don't worry my friend he'll be telling me off as well."

"â€¦Why?"

Grinning at the fact that D'Artagnan was still lucid enough to

respond Aramis returned to his work, answering the boy's question as he did so. "We got hurt."

D'Artagnan huffed, feeling more like himself the more Aramis kept him talking, "â€|H'rdly our fault," he sulked. "Blame bandit-man."

Aramis snorted, "Bandit-man?"

Not seeming to understand why Aramis found it so funny D'Artagnan offered up a weak shrug before adding, "â€|It's 'is fault."

"That's very true," nodded Aramis, sitting back against his heels as he admired the quality of his work. He was quite proud that even in his weakened state he was able to give the boy neat stitches. It would be a poor replacement for the boy's own work if they had been anything less. "But," he added when the Gascon's attention was back on him, "When has that stopped our illustrious leader when he's worried."

"What?" Aramis asked gently when he saw D'Artagnan's frown at his words, though judging by the shaken head he got in response the boy was not willing to answer.

"Well," sighed Aramis, "I don't think either of us is in any condition to continue to Paris like this."

D'Artagnan's frame tensed, "Weâ€| have to," he said, trying to force himself up into a seating position, only to then be forced back down by Aramis.

"We're no good to either of them if we kill ourselves in the process," stated the medic, trying to keep the worry and guilt out of his voice. When D'Artagnan tried to sit up again he nearly growled at the stubborn fool. "Do you think I want to be stuck here?!" hissed the medic, "They're in this situation because of me so don't you think for one minute that I wouldn't be charging back to Paris if I could but as things stand we **need **rest and that's final so as much as it kills me to do it we're going to have to put off leaving for at least a few hours."

Thankfully it seemed D'Artagnan finally noticed the pain in his friend's face as he calmed down, nodding his acceptance to his friend's plan.

"H-How long?"

Aramis sighed, knowing the boy was as frustrated and annoyed by the whole situation as he was. "It's mid morning now, we get a few hours rest then hopefully we can be on our way by earlier afternoon and providing we don't run into anymore trouble we should hopefully be back in Paris by this evening."

D'Artagnan nodded, a small cheeky smile coming to his face as he added, "we don't have much in the way of luck it would seem."

Aramis grinned, "That my young Gascon friend is where you are wrong." When D'Artagnan responded with only a raised eyebrow he continued. "We were in an ambush where neither of us had weapons and you were down one arm and not only did we survive but we won. If that's not

luck I don't know what is."

"Fair enough," chuckled D'Artagnan, grimacing as the action aggravated his wounds.

"Speaking of being down an arm," said Aramis gently, his trained eyes watching the boy's face for his reaction. True to his expectation the boy gripped his broken arm tighter to his body and tried to look unbothered by the pain it was causing him.

"I need to check it D'Art," insisted the medic, his voice soft but firm

"It's fine," grumbled the Gascon

Aramis scoffed, "I doubt that. I may not have seen the hit you took to it but I know it happened now let me look at it."

Grumbling under his breath D'Artagnan released his grip on his arm and held it out to his friend, hissing slightly at the pain it caused.

Sympathy filled Aramis's eyes as he gently took hold of the arm, "I'll be as quick as I can."

D'Artagnan nodded, in too much pain to speak without running the risk of crying out in pain. Scrunching his eyes shut he took as many deep breaths as his damaged ribs would allow while Aramis worked.

Unfortunately for the Gascon, despite the splints in place, the bone had shifted position during the ambush. This meant that Aramis had to force it back into place, something that was not a pleasant experience for either of them.

"Breathe D'Art," soothed Aramis once the boy's scream of pain had ended. The medic worked fast to reset the splint and wrap the arm, closing his ears to the whimpers of pain the boy couldn't contain.

Seeing the exhaustion now plaguing his young friend and feeling it himself, Aramis ran his hand soothingly through the Gascon's hair, "You've lost a fair amount of blood my friend. Get some rest, we're both going to need it soon."

* * *

><p>PARIS

"Jacques!" bellowed Captain Treville as he entered the garrison, stopping only when the young stable-hand ran out to both greet him and take his horse.

"Captain?"

"Any sign of Athos or the others?" Treville asked as he dismounted. Musketeers were frequently coming and going from the garrison so Treville had learnt early on to ask such questions to those who were always there and would notice things like this. Plus the young teen had become fast friends with D'Artagnan and would notice straight

away if the young man or his companions had returned.

"No sir," admitted Jacques dejectedly. "There was a man that came by earlier asking about Monsieur Aramis, though he left pretty quick when he was told he wasn't here."

Treville nodded sadly, his worry growing at the lack of news regarding his men. Then his mind caught up with the rest of Jacques's report. "Someone came for Aramis?"

"Yes sir."

"Have you seen him before?"

Jacques was silent for a moment while he thought about his answer, "No sir," he admitted finally. "Iâ€¦ I didn't trust him though." He added as a bit of an afterthought, quickly looking down at his feet as if expecting to be berated for his opinion.

Treville's eyes narrowed, Jacques, despite his young age, was quite a perceptive young man, a life on the streets had gifted him quite the ability to read people and to know who could be trust and who couldn't. He also showed enough promise that the Captain was considering training him for the regiment when he came of age. If the teen sensed something was off then Treville would at least question it.

"Why not?"

Jacques looked surprised to be asked his opinion; even though this wasn't the first time it had happened. "Heâ€¦ He seemed relieved when the musketeer on watch told him that Monsieur Aramis wasn't here."

Treville didn't like the sound of that, he knew he couldn't truly take the matter up with anyone as no one would take the word of a stable-boy and because he may have not explained the situation fully to the King when he had asked where the missing men were.

In all honesty Treville was surprised the King had noticed them at all, it definitely wasn't like the monarch to keep track of the men guarding him but Treville reasoned that both Porthos and Athos had been solely on palace duty for a few days straight by that point so the King would have gotten used to seeing them there.

When the King had asked as to their whereabouts Treville had stated they were on a personal mission and would be back soon. Whilst King Louis seemed placated by this answer Treville could tell Cardinal Richelieu was not. The man was paranoid and suspicious by nature and Treville knew it was only a matter of time before he learnt the truth. The Captain could only hope his men had returned before then. The regiment could really do without the King learning that one of the men had run off in a haze of grief and gotten himself and someone who was essentially a civilian into a dangerous situation.

"Sir?" Jacques said hesitantly, pulling the Captain from his thoughts.

"If that man comes by again I want to know right away is that understood?"

"Yes sir," nodded the youth.

Treville smiled, though it failed to reach his eyes, "Back to work then."

Once the young boy had returned the stables with his horse Treville headed up to his office, hoping the mind-numbing task of paperwork could distract him from the growing worry that something was seriously wrong with his men.

17. Taking A Chance

****Evening My Lovelies ****

****I'm rather proud of the second half of this chapter so I'm really hoping you all like it. ****

****We've reached over 200 reviews! That's amazing as we're not even chapter 20 yet XD ****

****Notes On Reviews: ****

Deana: Thanks for the review - Getting back to Paris is going to be very painful for everyone unfortunately :) Enjoy the new chapter!
x

Debbie (Guest): Thanks for the review - I just seem to be in a bantering mood lately so I'm glad you're enjoying it. D'Art and Aramis aren't really in the best health to take on our baddies but it would be an interesting thing to see happen. Enjoy the new chapter!
x

criminally charmed: Thanks for the review - haha yeah our boys are ALWAYS in trouble. Enjoy the new chapter! x

FierGascon: Thanks for the review - *waves back* :D We won't be seeing Treville until tomorrow but he's not going to be pleased when the truth comes to light. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Tidia: Thanks for the review - Gotta love brotherly moments, we get some more today and tomorrow :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Issai: Thanks for the reviews - In all fairness I think any man would be a better man than Daviau. Aramis's and D'Art's trouble is far from over unfortunately. I'm quite liking Jacques so far, he's popping up again tomorrow. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Helensg: Thanks for the review - Unfortunately the fate of him in my stories lol :) Got a little bit more Athos whump for you today :) Enjoy the new chapter! x

Zoe (Guest): Thanks for the review - Gotta love ranty Aramis :D Athos is going to be having stern words with the pair of them when they're all better. We'll be getting to Paris tomorrowish and we'll be seeing Viv today :) I'm really hoping you like Porthos's moment. Enjoy the new chapter! x

Guest: Thanks for the review - Yeah, I must stop introducing new

characters as I take so long to decide on names for them. The key part of that bit was ... For Now Mwhahahahaha :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

Lilac Lavender: Thanks for the review - I hadn't even thought of that but I completely get what you mean. Let's just say that that's what I used for inspiration lol. I think we may end up seeing Marcel help our boys we'll have to wait to see. I'm really glad you liked the rant, I have such fun writing them so it's nice to know people like them. We're getting a Porthos rant tomorrow which I'm looking forward to seeing the reactions to. We'll be getting back to Paris (kinda) tomorrow :) Thanks for the congrats and lots of thanks for the consistent reviews they always make my day :D Enjoy the new chapter! x

****As always much love and many thanks for following/favouriting/reviewing/reading ****

****Enjoy!****

****xxx****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter Seventeen: Taking A Chance
*

After their ordeal at Daviau and Marcel's hands Porthos and Athos were left largely alone.

The larger musketeer felt like utter crap and knew, judging by the anger that ignited in Athos's pain-dulled eyes whenever the man looked at him, that he must look seriously bad as well. Thankfully the blood from his broken nose had long since stopped, it now only causing an annoyance by making it difficult to breathe.

Porthos's ribs had sustained heavy damage and the man knew that if it came down to a proper full on fight, the sort of one Athos had volunteered to sit in the chair for, then he would be of little use. The damage was making it painful to even breathe so he doubted he would last long once his opponent noticed his obvious weakness.

The musketeer was also pretty sure one of his shoulders was dislocated but his entire body was in so much pain that he couldn't be completely sure. He did know that several of his fingers had been dislocated as he could remember Daviau's smirk as he pulled them from their sockets.

Overall the musketeer was a mess of injuries and bruises and judging by the pain he could feel shooting through him there were most likely more injuries than he was aware of.

"â€|'Thos?" croaked Porthos, his throat dry and his voice hoarse. None of that really mattered to him though; nothing mattered, not since Daviau had broken one of his best friend's bones. Since then the swordsman had been largely unresponsive, alternating between bouts of consciousness and unconsciousness. In fact the only time Porthos had seen any emotion or life in him during the last couple of hours was whenever he had strength enough to look at him. The look on Athos's face was one Porthos had seen many times before, most recently when D'Artagnan had lain unconscious in his bed recovering

from the wound Vadim had inflicted on him. It was a look that promised deadly pain to the causer of whatever injury the person he was staring at had.

"Athosâ€|" he called again having noticed the man beginning to stir.

"â€|P-P'thos?" came a raspy reply, the hoarseness of the man's voice making Porthos flinch and his anger rise as he knew that unlike his own voice, which was hoarse from lack of fluids, Athos's was hoarse as the man had screamed himself raw.

"How are you doing my friend?" Porthos asked gently, his voice full of worry as he gazed at his friend.

Athos shot the larger man a look that said it should be pretty obvious how he was doing before calming himself with a deep breath and stating "I'veâ€| been better."

Porthos snorted, "You and me both."

Athos looked ready to retort to that when the sound of approaching footsteps caught their attention and had the swordsman tensing.

* * *

><p>Porthos could only watch with sympathy as his friend's body reacted to the sound. He knew that if the musketeer had more strength than what currently remained within in then he would be fighting against his body's reaction but as things were he was unable to stop the way his body, that was coming to associate that sound with near unbearable pain, reacted.<p>

It was safe to say however that neither man was expecting what happened when the door opened.

Both had assumed that Daviau or Marcel would stroll in and continue the questioning they had abandoned several hours earlier, so needless to say both were surprised when the door opened and a young woman was pushed into the room with such force that it sent her flying to the ground.

Despite not knowing anything about the new woman both musketeers could tell she was a prisoner like them. The marks around the young woman's wrists told of fighting against restraints and the way the back of her dress was torn and stained with blood spoke of a whipping. Clearly whoever the woman was she was definitely in the same position as them.

"Gentlemen," remarked Daviau as he and Marcel entered the room after the woman who had risen shakily to her hands and knees. "Meet the lovely Lady Vivienne."

Porthos stared at the woman; from the parts of her he was able to see he could see the resemblance to Marsac. She had dark brown wavy hair similar to her brother's and they shared the same bone structure.

"W-What are you playing at now?" growled Athos, somehow still managing to come across as quite intimidating despite his current

appearance.

"I thought you might need some more motivation to answer my questions," shrugged Daviau as he gestured to Marcel to restrain Vivienne. "You may not care about your own fates but what of an innocents?"

Vivienne finally reacted to this, her head shooting up to stare at Daviau, her eyes were wide with fear and tear marks stained her cheeks.

"Aramis practically gave himself up to try and save her, how would he react if she came to further harm because of the two of you?"

At Daviau's words Vivienne seemed to pale further as she watched both musketeers grit their teeth.

"You were trying to convince us he and the whelp were dead not even half a day ago," reminded Porthos as he gave the two men as deadly a glare as he could considering one of his eyes were still swollen shut.

Daviau shrugged and acted like Porthos hadn't spoken, "Something to ponder at any rate," and with one last smirk the pair exited the room.

"I-I'm sorry," sobbed Vivienne as soon as the three of them were alone. "I didn't meanâ€¦ I'd neverâ€¦ I just wanted it to stop!"

Porthos and Athos shared a pitying look at the crying woman.

"We know," said Athos softly bringing the woman's attention to him. "This is no fault of yours and nor will Aramis blame you." Vivienne breathed deeply trying to curtail her sobs, "How badly are you hurt?"

"Is it just your back?" Porthos asked when the woman seemed too shook up to answer, both men sighed in relief when she nodded, thankful that the young woman hadn't suffered further at their captors hands.

* * *

><p>For the next hour or so the trio tried to keep each other's spirits up by talking. Vivienne would share stories about the pranks she and Aramis used to play on her brother while Porthos would tell her about some of their more crazier missions with Athos adding in small details here and there or reigning Porthos in when he began wildly exaggerating.<p>

Before too long though the door to their cell opened again. This time however the smells of food caught their attention before they even noticed the man bringing it in.

Porthos barely bit back his smirk in time. He had been mulling over a plan since the last time they were fed and he knew the time to put it into action was soon. His only worry now was whether his current state would be enough to pull it off.

As Vivienne's chains left her enough room to eat they were left on, as a bowl of what they could only guess was stew was thrust into her hand.

Porthos was next; he had been moved when the attack on him had happened. Marcel, who was dishing out the food, was forced to release one of his hands so he could eat. Once Porthos had been given his share the same thing was done to Athos before Marcel declared they'd be back in a little while for the bowls as he left the room.

"Eat," instructed Porthos as he saw Athos just poking his food with the spoon. He could only imagine what the pain in his body was doing to his brother's appetite but the man's health would only decline further if he refused to eat.

Athos glared lightly at his friend before bringing the first spoonful of food to his lips. In truth just the smell of the food made him want to gag but he knew he couldn't let himself wither away and leave his brother alone just because of a bit of nausea.

True to their word not an hour later saw the door to their cell opening again, although to Porthos's glee this time it was Daviau who entered.

"Alright hand them over," instructed the man with a sneer, moving from Athos to Vivienne, though not without turning one of the cuffs a little more.

"You're not going to defeat me with a bowl so hand it over," sneered Daviau as he stood in front of Porthos.

Porthos smirked, "Oh I don't need a bowl to end you." Then, faster than any of the room's occupants would have thought possible considering the musketeer's current injuries, Porthos used all of his strength to jam the handle end of his spoon directly into Daviau's eye. The man dropped the bowls he had been carrying as his hands shot up to his eye, screams tearing from his throat the entire time.

Without wasting a second Porthos used his free hand to grip tightly around Daviau's throat and slam him against the wall. Daviau crumpled pretty quickly then and despite not knowing if the man was actually dead or not Porthos then began to stretch so he could search his pockets, letting out a small whoop when his fingers curled around a key.

"Are you mad!" hissed Vivienne, her eyes never leaving the crumpled form of Daviau. "When his friend comes looking for him what are we going to do then?"

Lifting up the key for her to see, Porthos grinned, "We'll be long gone."

As soon as he was free Porthos scrambled over to Athos, ignoring all of the swordsman's insistent protests that he free Vivienne first.

"Told ya I could do it with a spoon," smirked the larger man, ginning brightly when Athos let out a breathy chuckle.

"Get her," instructed the swordsman nodding to the still slightly shocked woman.

"I can get her while you're getting feeling back 'Thos," explained Porthos as he began untightening the cuffs, fury growing within him as he saw the damage they had inflicted. Athos let out a few small cries of relief as the pressure was removed from his bones and was immensely grateful that his brother didn't comment on it.

With Athos free from the crushing grips of the chair Porthos made to free Vivienne, her scared yet determined demeanor bringing a soft grin to the musketeer's face.

"Can you walk 'Thos?" Porthos asked as he helped Vivienne to her feet. The pair of them were quite shaky but he was confident their legs would hold for now.

"We'll see," Athos mused, sending a silent request for help to Porthos who moved without question to the man's side to help him stand. Almost immediately it became clear that the musketeer would not be able to walk. The second any weight was put on his legs a scream of pain tore out of his throat and sent him sagging against his friend.

"L-Leave me," panted Athos once the pain had subsided enough for him to do so. "Get her out of here, find Aramis and the boy."

Porthos growled, "Not happened," and he flung one of Athos's arms around his shoulder, being as mindful of both of their injuries as he could. "All for one right? I aint leaving ya behind."

Vivienne steeled herself, "Nor would I allow you to suffer for my freedom," she declared before throwing Athos's other arm over her shoulders, barely biting back her own cry of pain as the movement pulled at her healing wounds.

"Shut up 'Thos," said Porthos fondly when he noticed the man about to protest their actions. "Lets get out of here."

End
file.